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## SECTION II.

THE

## ALPS OF SAVOY AND PIEDMONT.

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## SECTION II.

## THE ALPS OF SAVOY AND PIEDMONT.

INCLUDING THE ITALIAN LAKES, THE PENNINE ALPS, AND  
PART OF DAUPHINÉ.

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## PRELIMINARY INFORMATION.\*

## CONTENTS.

- |                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. GENERAL INFORMATION. | 4. GUIDES.         |
| 2. INNS.                | 5. BOOKS AND MAPS. |
| 3. ROADS, MULES, &c.    | 6. SKELETON TOURS. |

§ 1. THE country dealt with in the second portion of this volume is the Alpine region bounded by the Rhone valley and the Simplon Pass on the one side, and the sea and the Col di Tenda on the other, which may be comprehensively described as the Western Alps, together with the Lake District of Lombardy.

In dealing with so extensive a region in limited space, selection has been necessary. While the Pennine Alps are fully and the Graian Alps and Waldensian districts generally described, the chief routes only in the more remote districts have been followed out. A considerable amount of information, however, has been added in every part of the section and especially with regard to the central glacier group of Dauphiné.

The Western Alps, as above defined, are divided between Switzerland, France and Italy. The Swiss frontier follows the crest of the Pennine chain and the watershed of the Rhone valley to the Lake of Geneva.

SAVOY, in which Mt. Blanc and Chamonix are situated, became French in 1860. It consists of two main divisions—*Haute Savoie*, between the Lake of Geneva and a line drawn from Mont Blanc to the Lake of Bourget,—and *Savoie*, or Savoy proper, between that line and another drawn westward from Mont Cenis. High Savoy has *Annecy* for its chief town, Savoy proper *Chambéry*; and in the latter division are the important valleys of the Isère or *Tarentaise*, and the Arc or *Maurienne*.

PIEDMONT has on its N. and W. sides a clearly defined boundary in the Alps. From the valley of the Toccia, which lies within its frontier, to the Simplon it is divided from Switzerland by the Lepontine Alps; from the Simplon to the Col de Ferrex by the Pennine Alps; from the Col de Ferrex to the

\* For general information, see the Introduction to the previous part of this volume, to which the following pages are supplementary.

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Mont Cenis from Savoy by the chain of Mont Blanc and Graian Alps; from Mont Cenis to the Col d'Argentière, at the head of the valley of the Stura; from the French Departments of Hautes Alpes and Basses Alpes by the Cottian Alps—the old province of Dauphiné; and from the Argentière to the sources of the Tanaro in the Monte dello Schiavo Southern Piedmont is separated by the Maritime Alps from the Department of Alpes Maritimes, or County of Nice. East of the Monte dello Schiavo the Alps pass insensibly into the Apennines.

South of the Pennines the next division of the Alpine chain is known as the *Graian Alps*. They have been divided into: 1, the mountains of Cogne; 2, the main chain from the Little St. Bernard to Mont Cenis; 3, the ranges between the valleys of the Isère and Arc. These beautiful groups include respectively (1) the *Griola* and *Grand Paradis* (13,300 ft.), (2) the elegant *Mont Pourri*, and the *Grande Casse* (12,780 ft.), (3) the *Levanna*, *Ciamarella Albaron*, and *Chardonnet* (12,336 ft.).

The *Cottian Alps* extend from the pass of Mont Cenis to the Col d'Argentière. In *Monte Viso* they attain 12,643 ft., but their summits average 10,000 ft. They are wild and craggy, and remarkable for the rich colouring of their chlorite slate and serpentine rocks, and the transparency of the streams. On the Italian side they contain the romantic Vaudois valleys.

The *Maritime Alps* are a knot of rugged granite summits conspicuous from Cannes and the plain of Piedmont. The highest peaks range from 10,000 to 10,700 ft. and sustain some small glaciers.

The *Dauphiné Alps*, to the westward of the Cottians, are outliers of the main chain, seated far within the frontier of France, but for height and grandeur of scenery take rank next to the Pennine and Oberland groups. The *Pointe des Écrins*, their pre-eminent peak, is 13,462 ft. above the sea, and three others exceed 13,000 ft., seventeen 12,000 ft., and twenty-nine 11,000.

Some of the approaches to this mountain region are through singularly deep and sterile defiles or *combes*, "often," says Forbes, "of fantastical sublimity, thinly-peopled, and extending many miles."

On the side of Italy the Alps offer a striking difference in their appearance from that presented in the approaches from Switzerland or France. From these the intervention of secondary ranges, and the long valleys, preclude any great extent of the chain from being seen at the same time; but from the plains of Piedmont, even from Turin—not 30 miles in a direct line from the nearest point in the crest—a range of the central peaks and passes, extending through 130 miles, is visible. A day's journey is sometimes sufficient for the ascent of the highest ridge of the Alps from the plains of Piedmont; whilst on the other side two or three days of approach through deep valleys amidst the mountains, are requisite for its attainment. The *Italian Alpine valleys*, with their unbrageous chestnuts, trellised vines, campaniles, mills, and fresco-painted oratories on commanding knolls, are full of pictures, and differ entirely from the Swiss valleys, which are simpler and sterner in aspect.

There is no need to recommend Zermatt and Chamonix to tourists; and the halting-places in the intervening valleys on the Swiss side of the chain, St. Luc, Evolena and Arolla, now attract their fair share of attention. But it is

somewhat singular that so small a proportion of the visitors to these favourite centres make the tour of the S. valleys of Monte Rosa, or even pass by the St. Théodule to Val d'Aosta. The tourists who visit the superb ice scenery of Cogne scarcely increase in numbers, though the accommodation is now fair. Val Anzasca, Val Sesia, Val d'Aosta, and its tributary valleys, naturally unite with a Swiss tour. Those who wander farther south are generally more or less seasoned travellers. These know how to choose their own paths. The Val de Tignes in the Tarentaise, the Valli di Lanzo, easily accessible from Turin, the Vaudois valleys, Crissolo at the base of Monte Viso, the health resorts in the Maritime Alps, and last but not least Ville Vallouise and La Grave in Dauphiné may be recommended as centres of attraction.

The scenery of the *Waldensian Valleys* is rich and pleasing, though not of the highest order, and they are attractive to Englishmen as the cradle and the stronghold of a brave and stedfast Protestant community, who have maintained their faith in spite of persecution, fire, and sword. Milton and Wordsworth have commemorated the patient sufferings and heroic deeds of the Vaudois; and Dr. Gilly in recent times has rendered their story fascinating by the charms of an enthusiastic pen.

The Piedmontese and Subalpine valleys furnish a large emigration, and supply all Europe with workmen in particular trades. From the Engadine come pastrycooks; from Como, thermometer and barometer makers; from Orta, plasterers; Biella, masons and builders; Canavese, carpenters; Val Sesia, masons; Val Blegno, chocolate makers and chestnut roasters; Val Calanca, glaziers; Val Bregaglia, chimney-sweepers; Val Mastalone, cooks; Ticino, coffeehouse-keepers. They are usually men of great industry and frugality, and, if possible, return to their native valleys to enjoy the fruits of their industry. Throughout Switzerland, wherever a large house, a large building, or a road is wanted, a gang of Piedmontese are employed; and the railways in Switzerland were chiefly made by Piedmontese. In consequence of the great male emigration, most of the hard work is done by women, particularly porters over the mountains; and from long practice, the women are better able to carry weights on their backs than the men. The valleys on the S. side of Monte Rosa are remarkable as being inhabited in the higher villages by a race of German origin and language.

The best season for travelling in this part of the Alpine chain is the early summer, when the mountains are green and their rich *flora* in blossom. In July and August the heat, particularly in the southern districts, is very considerable. In September, after a short break, the weather generally becomes settled again; and the latter half of that month and the beginning of October is a pleasant season for travelling in the southern valleys. At this season, however, many of the bath-houses used as summer resorts by Italians are shut up.

It is a common mistake to visit the Italian Lakes too early—in March or April—when the weather is generally broken, and the vegetation only half out. May and June are here the perfect months. The corn is by that time tall, and the vines have put forth their shoots. The snows still lingering on the higher mountains, shine through the rose thickets of the gardens on

the lakes, which resound, night and day, with quires of nightingales. The hillsides are pinè with cyclamen, and hung with laburnum-blossoms, the upper pasturages carpeted with the most exquisite wildflowers. The atmosphere has a fresh purity which it loses after the midsummer heats, and which adds both to the beauty of the landscape and to the traveller's power of enjoyment.

The absence of agreeable short walks is, to those who then reside on the lakes, the one drawback. Intercourse being generally carried on by water, the paths are, as a rule, for the first 500 or 1000 feet, or until the region of vineyards has been passed, steep and rough staircases, too often enclosed between high walls.

§ 2. *Inns*.—The *Inns* within the frontier of Italy were, twenty years ago, vastly inferior in accommodation, and especially in cleanliness, to those of Switzerland and Germany; and even now the traveller must not expect, in remote villages, or at houses frequented chiefly by Italians, the cleanliness and comfort to which he is accustomed in similar cases in Switzerland. The more frequented villages have now, however, good inns, and those built on the lakes, as at Baveno, Pallanza, Stresa, Bellaggio, Cadenabbia, &c., are magnificent and luxurious palaces, equal to the best in Switzerland.

The "Club Alpino" is unremitting in its endeavours to improve the mountain inns of Piedmont. In *Val d'Aosta* there are some good hotels, particularly at *Aosta* itself and *Courmayeur*; at *Cogne*, and the *Bagni di Ceresole*, rough and homely quarters; at *Gressoney*, at *Breuil*, at *Alagna*, at *Ponte Grande* and *Macugnaga*, in *Val Anzasca*, comfortable inns.

Until the last few years the Dauphiné mountains, though yielding to none in grandeur, were but seldom visited, and the accommodation in the district was execrable. The mountain ranges have now been fully explored by mountaineers, and their frequent visits, and the active measures taken by the residents at Grenoble, have led to an extraordinary improvement in the inns and guides throughout the district. At *Monetier*, *Ville Vallouise*, *La Grave*, *St. Christophe*, and *La Berarde* fair charges, clean beds, and enough to eat are now found. A similar improvement is in progress in the valleys of the *Tarentaise*, and in a few years this region, lying within easy reach of *Aix-les-Bains*, will probably become frequented.

When the traveller in the Alps receives the hospitality of the *curés* of retired villages, or of the pastor in the Protestant Waldensian valleys, where there are no inns, it is usual to leave with the housekeeper, or for her, a donation, which it is just should at least equal the cost of such accommodation at an inn; the tax would otherwise be heavy upon the limited means of the host, and kindness and attention are thus insured to future travellers. For supper, bed, and breakfast, 5 or 6 frs. are given. The *curés* in these valleys are not often much superior to the ordinary peasants, from whom they have no doubt sprung, and their income is very limited. They are, however, often ardent mountaineers.

In Piedmont a rough "patois" is spoken, but the traveller will generally find French serve him for necessities, and Italian is everywhere understood.

§ 3. *Roads, Mules, &c.*—The *Roads* skirting the Alps, and the approaches

to them from the plains of Piedmont, and in Savoy, are generally excellent. Many of the valleys on the Italian side are traversed by roads made at the expense of the communes, which are marvels of industry and engineering art. Wherever there is intercourse there is a good road adapted to the wants of the inhabitants. Chars may generally be obtained at moderate charges.

Mules may be obtained on all routes accessible to them, at charges varying from 5 to 6 francs a day; guides, at 4 or 5 francs a day, may be had in many Alpine villages of Piedmont. Ladies now find *side-saddles* in many places.

§ 4. *Guides*.—More caution should be exercised in choosing *Guides* on the Italian side of the Alps than in Switzerland, as guides by profession are rarer, and any idle person, however unqualified, may offer himself for the sake of a good day's wage. No one should be accepted without sufficient evidence both of *good character* and experience, from the innkeeper, the curé, or some respectable person of his village. Certificates from former employers should also be inquired for. At Courmayeur, at Cogne, at Breuil, and in the villages on the S. side of the passes round Monte Rosa, there is now a supply of guides, but, with the exception of one or two Breuil and Courmayeur men, they are not equal, for glacier expeditions, to the best Swiss Guides. In Dauphiné there are several guides capable of any ordinary glacier work, and the Gaspards of St. Christophe, the first conquerors of the Meije, must be placed in the first rank of their profession. In the villages near Monte Viso guides for the ascent of that noble peak are now found.

At no place is so much caution in choosing a guide requisite as at Chamonix, owing to the pernicious system by which incompetent peasants are placed on the roll of guides, and entitled to their turn of service. The exertions of the Alpine Club (aided latterly by the French Club) have succeeded in establishing exemptions, the practical effect of which is to relieve all who know how to avail themselves of them, from the rule of rotation (see Chamonix).

§ 5. *Books and Maps*.—The intelligent traveller finds his map even more indispensable than a guide, and the notes given in the Introduction are therefore here repeated.

For the districts described below, the traveller will find serviceable, Ball's 'South-Western Alps' and 'Pennine Alps,' 2s. 6d. each, thin and handy volumes; Joanne's 'Alpes Françaises,' and 'Alpes Maritimes,' bulky works, full of information; King's 'Italian Valleys of the Pennine Alps,' Freshfield's 'Italian Alps,' and the following local handbooks: 'Guida nelle Prealpi Bergamasche,' 1876; 'Guida nel Biellese,' 1872; 'Guida de la Vallée d'Aoste,' Gorret and Bieh, 1876; 'Guide per le Valli dell' Orco,' &c., 1878 (southern Graians); 'Le Valli di Lanzo, Marchese Clavarini,' 1873; 'Monte Viso e i suoi dintorni,' 1875.

Within the Swiss frontier Dufour's map satisfies most requirements, but in the Pennine Alps the large map of the Swiss Alpine Club (<sup>1</sup>/<sub>25000</sub>) in eight sheets (17 sh) is most useful to mountaineers or travellers making a long halt in a single locality.

In the French and Savoy Alps the new French Ordnance Survey is the best map, 'Carte de l'Etat-Major,' <sup>1</sup>/<sub>50000</sub>, 4 fr. a sheet in Paris. The 'Carte de

la Frontière,' on the same scale, is a reproduction of a part of this map in smaller sheets, with contour lines.

Mieullet and Viollet-le-Duc have published maps of the Mont Blanc chain.

The French Alpine Club have published a map of the Pelvoux group,  $\frac{1}{400000}$ .

For tourists in Savoy, the maps of Perrin of Chambéry may be recommended,  $\frac{1}{100000}$ . Mayr's 'Karte der Alpenländer' (sheets 4 and 7) is a good general map.

For the Piedmontese Alps, as a whole, there is no good map. The Government Survey,  $\frac{1}{500000}$ , is ludicrously bad in the mountains.

The southern spurs of the Pennine chain, and the Graian Alps, have, however, been mapped by the individual enterprise of members of the Alpine Club, and particularly of Messrs. Adams Reilly and Nichols.

Mr. A. Reilly has published maps of 'The Southern Valleys of Monte Rosa' and 'The Mont Blanc Chain' (Longmans).

The south-western sheet of the Alpine Club map, edited by Mr. R. C. Nichols, includes Val d'Aosta and the greater part of Savoy; the south-eastern sheet the Italian Lakes and Bergamasque Alps. This map is the best in existence for the portion of the Italian Alps it includes; its scale is, however, somewhat too small for the amount of detail given.

At Löscher's Library, 19, Via di Po, Turin, most books and maps relating to the Piedmontese Alps can be obtained. At Grenoble the traveller will find in the publications of the Société des Touristes many useful facts as to guides and accommodation.

§ 6. *Skeleton Tours* are subjoined. The first three show how travellers able to ride, but unwilling to undertake fatiguing expeditions, or to submit to bad accommodation, may best see the districts here described. It should be remembered that Turin is an excellent base for a mountain tour, where maps, books, or a store of portable preserved provisions, can be laid in. See also *Introd.* § x.

*Tour in the Pennine Alps and Italian Lakes.*

|                                                                                         |                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Geneva to Chamonix.                                                                     | Zermatt, Riffelberg, &c.                      |
| Tête Noire to the Tête Noire inn.                                                       | St. Théodule. (Foot or chaise-i-<br>porteur.) |
| Col de Balme to Chamonix.                                                               | Châtillon, Val d'Aosta.                       |
| Brévent.                                                                                | Col de Jon.                                   |
| Montanvers.                                                                             | Col de Ranzola.                               |
| Chamonix to Courmayeur, by the Col<br>de Vosa, Col du Bonhomme and<br>Col de la Seigne. | Gressoney.                                    |
| Courmayeur to Aosta.                                                                    | Col d'Ollen. (Inn.)                           |
| St. Remy.                                                                               | Alagna.                                       |
| Hospice of the Great St. Bernard.                                                       | Varallo, Val Sesia, Val Mastalone.            |
| Liddes.                                                                                 | Col de Colma.                                 |
| Martigny. ( <i>See Switzerland, Route 56.</i> )                                         | Orta, on Lake of Orta.                        |
| Sion (rly.).                                                                            | Vogogna.                                      |
| Arolla, by Val d'Hérens.                                                                | Macugnaga. Val Anzasca.                       |
| Zinal by Col de Torrent.                                                                | Monte Moro Pass.*                             |
| St. Luc.                                                                                | Saas. Fée Valley.                             |
| Gruben by Zmeiden Pass.                                                                 | Visp, in Valais.                              |
| St. Niklaus by Augstbord Pass.                                                          | Pass of the Simplon.                          |
| Schwarzhorn.                                                                            | Domo d'Ossola.                                |

\* Those who wish to avoid the Moro will return to Domo d'Ossola and drive to Canobbio (Rte. 113), or make a tour by the Simplon, Furca and St. Gothard Passes.

Canobbio, by Val Canobbina.  
Locarno (excursions to Val Maggia  
and Val Verzasca).  
Stresa (steamer).  
Varese.

Lugano or } Monte Generoso.  
Mendrisio }  
Lake of Como.  
Home by Milan, Turin, and Mont  
Cenis.

*Tour in Savoy and the Graian Alps, starting from Aix-les-Bains.*

Anney.  
Albertville.  
Bride-les-Bains.  
Pralognan.  
Col de la Vanoise.  
Mont Cenis.  
Turin.  
Lanzo (excursion to Viu).  
Forno.  
Ceresole, by Col della Crocetta or

della Piccola.  
Locana. Ponte.  
Cogne, by Col della Nouva.  
Excursion to *Pousset*. (Partly foot.)  
Aosta.  
Becca di Nona.  
Ivrea.  
Biella by Oropa.  
Varallo.

*Tour in the Dauphiné Alps, the Vaudois Valleys, and by Monte Viso to the Maritime Alps.*

Grenoble.  
La Grave.  
Excursion to Plateau de Paris.  
Monestier.  
Ville Vallouise, by Col de l'Echauda.  
Briançon.  
Cesanne.  
Col de Sestrières.  
Pragelas—Val Clusone.  
Perouse.  
Val Germanasca. Protestant valley.  
Balsille.  
Pol de la Fontaines.  
Cralis.  
Col Julien.  
Bobbio.

La Tour.  
Val Angrogna.  
Rora.  
Luserna.  
Crissolo by Sea Bianca.  
Sources of the Po.  
Château Dauphin.  
Colle della Bocca to Val Maira.  
Cuneo.  
Certosa of Pesio.  
Tenda.  
Col di Tenda.  
Baths of Valdieri.  
Col delle Cereze.  
St. Martin Lantosque.  
Nice.

*A Walking Tour in the Dauphiné and Cottian Alps.*

- Grenoble.
- Grande Chartreuse.
1. St. Laurent du Pont.
2. Chambéry by Les Échelles.
3. Dent du Chat.
4. Aix les Bains.  
Visit Haute Combe.
5. Over Dent de Nivolet to Mont-  
mélian.
6. Baths of Allevard.
7. Ferrière or chalet at the Sept  
Laux.
8. Bourg d'Oisans.
9. La Grave.
10. Col des Arsines to Monestier.
11. Briançon.
12. Mont Genève to Cesanne.

[Switz.]

13. Fenestrelles, Col Albergian, and  
Val St. Martin to
14. Perrero.
15. Col de Lauzoun to Val Angrogna  
and La Tour de Luserne.
16. Excursion from La Tour.
17. Val Pellice to Bergerie de Pra.
18. Col de Seylières to Crissolo.
19. Col delle Sagnetti to Ponte Chia-  
nale.
20. Col di Vallante to Abriès.
21. Briançon.
22. Ville Val Louise.
23. To La Bérarde by Col de la  
Tempe.
24. Bourg d'Oisans.
25. Grenoble.

*A Tour for practised climbers, with glacier guides, in the South-Western Alps, from Aix-les-Bains or Courmayeur.*

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To Bourg St. Maurice.</li> <li>2.-3. Ascend Mont Pourri—descend to St. Foi.</li> <li>4. To Tignes.</li> <li>5. Ascend Aig. de la Sassièrè.</li> <li>6. Col de la Leisse and Grande Motte, to Entre deux Eaux.</li> <li>7. Col de la Vanoise to Pralognan, ascend Grande Casse <i>en route</i>. Excursion to Glacier de la Vanoise (Dôme de Chasseforêt).</li> <li>8. Col de Charière to Modane and St. Jean de Maurienne, or across Péclet Massif.</li> <li>9. To St. Jean d'Arves.</li> <li>10. Ascend Grandes Rousses (N. peak), and descend to Bourg d'Oisans.</li> <li>11. To St. Christophe.</li> <li>12. Ascend Aig. du Plat (marvellous panorama).</li> <li>13. To La Bérarde.<br/>Ascend Sommet des Rouies.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Col du Selé to Vallouise.</li> <li>15. Bivouac at Refuge Tuckett.</li> <li>16. Ascend Pointe des Ecrins, and descend by Col des Ecrins to La Bérarde.</li> <li>17. Brèche de la Meije to La Grave.</li> <li>18. Col de Martignan to Châlets of Rieublanç.</li> <li>19. Cross Col des Aig. d'Arve (ascending northern or central Aig. d'Arve from col) to Valloires and St. Michel.</li> <li>20. To Bonneval.</li> <li>21. Ascend Chardonnet or Levanna.</li> <li>22. Col di Carro to Ceresole.</li> <li>23-24. Col de Telleccio, Tour du Grand St. Pierre to Cogne.</li> <li>25-26. Ascend Grand Paradis, descending to Val Savaranche.</li> <li>27. Return to Cogne over the Grivola.</li> <li>28. To Val d'Aosta, by P. di Tersiva or Mont Emilius.</li> </ol> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The two following routes may be found useful by travellers leaving the Engadine for Italy in the autumn.

*A Week's Drive in the Bergamasque Alps.*

- |                                                                                          |                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Pontresina.<br/>Le Prese.<br/>Edolo, by Aprica Pass.<br/>Lovere.<br/>Lago d'Isèo.</p> | <p>Val di Scalve.<br/>Clusone, by Giogo di Castellone.<br/>Bergamo.<br/>Val Brembana to Branzi and back.</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*A Week's Walk in the Bergamasque Alps.*

- |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Aprica Pass.<br/>Val di Scalve, by Passo di Venerocolo.<br/>Ascend Presolana.</p> | <p>Gromo in Val Seriana.<br/>Falls of the Serio.<br/>Ascend Pizzo della Redorta to Sondrio.<br/>Passo della Venina to Branzi.</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|





# ROUTES IN SAVOY AND PIEDMONT.

THE ITALIAN LAKES, THE PENNINE ALPS, AND PART OF DAUPHINE.

## ROUTE 110.

VAL TELLINA TO BERGAMO, BY THE  
APRICA PASS AND VAL CAMONICA  
—LAGO D'ISEO—THE BERGAMASQUE  
VALLEYS.

|                         | Miles. |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Tirano to Edolo . . . . | 21     |
| Edolo to Breno . . . .  | 16     |
| Breno to Lovere . . . . | 15     |

This road into Italy combines two of the noblest valleys of the Italian Alps, with a very beautiful low pass, and a lake which adds to charms scarcely inferior to those of its more famous neighbours, those of seclusion and novelty. The road throughout is a military highway, and the accommodation at Edolo and Lovere is fair. This route is strongly recommended to travellers leaving the Engadine for the South. There are country diligences along the whole road. Le Prese to Edolo is an easy day's drive.

About  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Tirano (or 12 miles from Sondrio) the Aprica road crosses the bridge of Tresenda, and begins to climb a steep hill-side covered with chestnut-forests. The ascent is effected by one enormous zigzag. At the top of this, and on the spur of the mountain, where the road turns away from the Val Tellina, a view is obtained down that great valley crowned by the icy crest of the Disgrazia, which has few rivals in the Alps, and seen under favourable conditions of light (morning best) cannot fail to recall one of Turner's noblest landscapes. Here there is a country Inn (Belvedere). The road climbs steadily to the *Aprica Posthouse* (fair quarters) on the summit-level, as its name denotes, a spacious sunny tableland (4025 ft.).

[Between the Belvedere and the Posthouse a path comes in from *Val Belviso*. A foot-pass at its head leads

into Val di Scalve, and it is also possible to cross over rough ground to the head of Val Seriana.]

The descent of the fertile *Val Corteno* is exceedingly picturesque; and the picture, as Edolo, with its white towers and churches, muffled in chestnut woods, and overhung by the steep granite peaks of some outliers of the Adamello group comes into sight, is exceedingly beautiful.

*Edolo* (Due Mori, fair; Leone d'Oro), 2293 ft., is the chief place of Val Camonica. Diligence daily to Brescia. It is a small place with arcaded streets and the air of an ancient town. The Emperor Maximilian held his court here in 1516. The situation on both banks of the Oglio, a copious grey blue torrent, is very fine.

The road up the valley leads to the Tonale Pass, and by Val di Sole to Trent, or turning S. at Dimaro by an easy mule-pass (road projected) to Campiglio and Val Rendena, see *Handbook for S. Germany*, Rte. 220.

*Val Camonica* is one of the finest valleys in the Italian Alps. It resembles in some respects Val d'Aosta, but, the forests not having yet been destroyed, it presents a far more rich and smiling appearance, while the granitic chain of the Adamello supplies a background of the noblest mountain forms. The first lateral valley passed on the l. is Val di Malga, leading up to the Adamello itself (see *Handbook to Tyrol*). The river bends frequently, the road twice crosses it, and the scenery grows still more beautiful. A glen on the rt. (Val Paisco) offers an easy pass to Val di Scalve.

*Cedegolo* (fair but dear country Inn) is a large village at the opening of Val Saviore, a valley leading to the glaciers of the Adamello, and a pass into the Trentino. A Club-hut near the glaciers facilitates their ex-

ploration. (*Handbook to S. Germany*.) The valley now expands, and takes a tolerably straight direction. *Grevo*, a large village, is seen on the left bank of the river, to which the road returns before reaching

*Capo di Ponte* (Inn, poor). Beautiful scenery. On a bluff opposite a ruined castle; to the W. the abrupt heights of Monte Vaccido [mule-track to Val di Scalve.]

*Breno* (Pellegrino, Italia) is the chief place in the lower valley. [Croce Domini Pass, see *Handbook to S. Germany*.]

From Breno the road to Lovere follows the rt. bank of the Oglio. Half-way the torrent of Val di Scalve is crossed.

[At *Montecchio* the main military highway crosses the river, and follows its left bank to *Pisogne*, at the head of Lago d'Isèo. Thence it forces a way along the E. shore, passing through numerous tunnels and over terraces to Isèo and Brescia. *Pisogne* is 16½ miles from Breno, and Brescia 45½ by road].

A good country road, through rich fields and hedgerows, leads to

*Lovere* (San Antonio; Leone d'Oro, observe the frescoes in the courtyard: both fair). This romantic old town is built in terraces above the lake, the roof of one house being on a level with the first-floor of the next. Many of the houses on the quay have Gothic windows and arcaded fronts, and the appearance of the town seen from the water is most picturesque. In the last century it was the most fashionable place of resort of any on the lakes, and was visited by Lady M. Wortley Montagu, who bought a villa here, and it was hoped would serve "as a decoy to all the travelling English."

There are some fairly good pictures of the Brescian school in the churches, and a collection (open to the public) in the Palazzo Tadini.

Numerous delightful short walks or boat excursions may be made from Lovere. To the "*Orrido di Tinazzo*," a curious gorge near the road from Trescorre (gorges are generally called

"*Orridi*" in the Italian lake region, possibly a clue to the exact meaning of Virgil's "*horrida vallis*"). To the *Ch. of San Giovanni di Monte Cala*, with a noble view, and an ancient parchment of 1512, then copied from a more ancient document, describing a march of Charles the Great through this valley. Similar records exist in Val Rendena in the Trentino. There is a direct road from Lovere to Bergamo (26 m.), passing the Baths of Trescorre.

[No traveller with a day to spare should leave Lovere without visiting the "*Via Mala Bergamasca*." As has been stated, the Dezzo, the stream of Val di Scalve, flows out some miles above Lovere. From this point a road was in 1862 bored through a magnificent gorge which is a worthy rival of the Swiss Via Mala. A steep ascent, with noble views backwards over Val Camonica, leads past the hamlet of *Gorzone* (a Gothic wall-tomb of 1336 by the roadside) into a rich park-like basin in which are the prosperous villages of Terzano and Angolo. Above these villages the mountains close in immediately on the Dezzo. For variety of romantic beauty, the long cleft now entered is unsurpassed. The road is fairly kept, and is engineered with great boldness. At last, after 8 miles of constant struggle with every kind of difficulty, the road passes through a tunnel, and across the face of a bold cliff, and approaches *Dezzo* (17 miles; 3½ hrs). The hamlet is defiled by mining industry, but is very finely situated under the bold dolomite cliffs of the Presolana. It is at the entrance to *Val di Scalve*—a large mountain basin with many prosperous villages and iron-mines. Before the plague in 1630, it is said to have numbered 12,000 inhabitants: it has now 5000. Cardinal Mai, the linguist, was born here. Close to Dezzo the road divides; the left branch climbing in steep zigzags through exquisite meadows, in early summer a sea of flowers, to *Vil Minore* (A. Bonelli, fair) (3 miles), the other leading to (6 miles) *Schilpario*

(A. della Prudenza, fair). A terrace-road connects the two villages. The scenery of the upper valley is pleasing, and the bold limestone cliffs of the Presolana are a noble object. Pedestrians or riders may cross to the Aprica, to Val Camonica, or to Val Seriana by easy passes.

The hurried traveller will either drive back to Loverè the same day, or proceed over the pass to Clusone, which, until the piercing of the gorge, was the only road out of Val di Scalve. The ascent to the *Giogo di Castellone* (4265 ft.) begins at Dezzo, whence a good road, commanding charming views, climbs the steep flanks of the Presolana to a broad down under its S. shoulder. On the top is a hospice, where beds may be had.

[This is the best starting-point for the ascent of the *Presolana* (8202 ft.), a difficult mountain for its height.]

A dull descent leads to *Clusone* (Gambero, fair, and others), a large country town, at the junction of the roads to Bergamo, Val di Scalve, Lago d'Isèo, and the upper Val Seriana. Hence it is only 11 miles, by a good road, back to Loverè. The entire tour may be made in a long summer day, starting at daybreak and resting at Dezzo.]

There are several steamers daily on Lago d'Isèo.

As the traveller steams across the head of the lake to touch at Pisogne, the snowy peak of the Adamello is well seen, with the glaciers of Val Saviore on its flank. *Pisogne* (Corona; Tre Stelle) is a small town, lying at the foot of exquisitely green hills and rich with chestnut-forests. There are some frescoes of the 15th cent. in the Augustinian Convent.

The Lago d'Isèo has three reaches, running first S.W., then due S. to Isèo, and then W. to Sarnico. The upper reach, in the wonderful verdure of its shores and the noble vista up a great valley to a fine snow-peak, may remind the traveller of the head of the Lake of Geneva. The middle reach is bold and picturesque, steep cliffs falling into the water on both

shores, while in the centre rises the Monte Isola, an island-hill some mile and a half in length, crowned by a convent. One or two tiny islets, with buildings, lie beside it.

*Isèo* (Leone d'Oro on the quay), a prosperous town. The steamer continues down the comparatively tame lower arm to *Sarnico* (Vapore, Leone d'Oro, fair) at the point where the Oglio leaves the lake. [The *Villa Montecchio*, half an hour's walk from Sarnico, commands a view, reputed the most beautiful in Lombardy, over the Lombard plain on one side, and on the other of Sarnico and the lake.] Thence a branch railroad runs to Palazzuolo, whence the traveller reaches Brescia (*Inn*: Italia, fair), or Bergamo (*Inn*: Italia, excellent). (See *Handbook for N. Italy*.)

#### THE BERGAMASQUE VALLEYS.

Bergamo is a good headquarters for visiting the neighbouring valleys.

*Val Seriana* is a deep trenchlike valley, the landscapes near its head are bold, but the lower portion is tame compared to the rest of this district. It is a drive of about 24 miles to Clusone. A drive of sixteen miles more, through fine scenery, leads past *Gromo* (a fair country inn) to the highest village,

*Bondione* (very rough *Inn*), lying under the highest peaks of this district. The Monte della Redorta, 9975 ft., can be ascended by a mountaineer on the way to the Val Tellina, to which there are several high and rough, but fine, foot-passes. The attraction to ordinary tourists is the *Fall of the Serio*, in early summer among the finest in the Alps. A large body of water falls over a cliff nearly 200 ft. in height. There are several minor falls. There is an easy mule-pass from Bondione to Vil Minore, in Val di Scalve, and from Gromo an interesting pass to (7 or 8 hrs.) Branzi, in Val Brembana.

*Val Brembana* is, unlike Val Seriana, a winding glen, alternately contracting into narrow defiles and

opening into sunny basins. The mouth of the valley is some 5 miles W. of Bergamo.

[Here a road branches left to the *Baths of S. Onofrione* in Val Imagna (14 m. from Bergamo), an Italian watering-place, whence there are delightful walks over the Resegone to Lecco.]

*Zogno*, 11 miles (Italia, good), is the first village. (A beautiful road leads up *Val Serina*, through a defile to Serina, the birth-place of the two Palmas; fine pictures in the church.)

Four miles higher is

*San Pellégrino* (good *Inns* and a large bathing establishment; Antonio Baroni, a good guide for this district). Hence to *Piazza San Martino*, 24 m. from Bergamo, the valley is a succession of defiles, draped in southern vegetation. At *Piazza* (wretched *Inn*), the two branches of the valley unite. A road leads up the E. branch through a very fine gorge to

*Branzi*, 2200 ft. (*Osteria Berrera*, clean and fair), situated in a pastoral basin, 32 m. from Bergamo. A torrent pours down the hillside, opposite the village, in a succession of falls some 3000 ft. in height, which after rain must be superb. There is a pass to *Val Seriana* (see *ante*), and several to the *Val Tellina*. The *Corno Stella*, 8845 ft., is frequently ascended for the view. A path has been made to the top by the Italian Alpine Club, and a hut built near the summit.

The W. branch of *Val Brembana* soon divides again into two glens. Through the N. a road runs to the hamlet of *Olmo*, whence a mule-path, once a frequented commercial route, leads by the *Passo di San Marco* to *Morbegno*. The road up the W. glen runs as far as *Cussiglio*, thence a picturesque path leads to *Valtorta*, the highest hamlet; from which a short and easy but dull mule-pass crosses to *Introbio*. The *Pizzo dei Tre Signori* can be reached from this side.

This region is rich in attractions. Every glen is more or less beautiful, and in many of the village-churches there are good pictures.

Travellers who spend any time in

the district should procure the 'Guida alle Prealpi Bergamasche,' of Sig. Curo (Milan, Hoepli), an excellent pocket-guide, and the S.E. sheet of the Alpine Club map.

For further details as to Bergamo itself, and the ancient churches near it, see *Handbook to N. Italy*.

## ROUTE 111.

DOMO D'OSSOLA TO BAVENO. BORRO-MEAN ISLANDS.

| Domo.   | Miles. |
|---------|--------|
| Vogogna | 9      |
| Baveno  | 15     |

From Brieg to Domo d'Ossola, by the Simplon road, see Rte. 59.

At present it is 4 hrs.' drive by road.

A railway from Domo is projected.

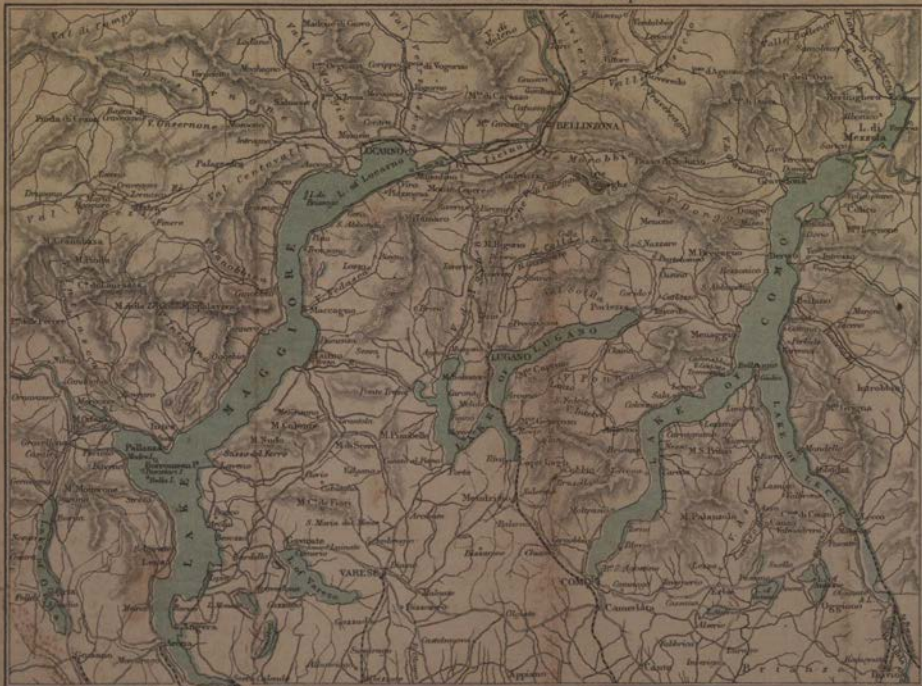
*Pallanza*, on the N. shore of the *Baveno Bay*, is perhaps a mile further from Domo than Baveno, on the S. There are diligences to both places, and a char from Domo is 15 fr. The steamers touch at each, and each is beautifully situated, and has a magnificent hotel. In hot weather, however, it is worthy of consideration that the sun is off Baveno by two o'clock in the afternoon, whilst it shines fiercely on *Pallanza* till the evening.

The road from Domo descends the wide and flat valley of the *Tosa*, the bridges over which, below Domo d'Ossola, and again 6 m. below *Vogogna* were carried off by the storms of 1834 and 1849, and for many years the diligences, &c., passed in boats. The bridges have been rebuilt.

At *Villa* the stream of *Val Antrona* is crossed. [This is a beautiful valley leading to several passes over the main chain to *Saas*. The chief village, *Antrona Piuva*, is reached in 2½ hrs. from *Villa* by a paved mule-track (accommodation at the syndic's house). The most frequented pass, rough but easy (9 hrs.), is the *Col d'Antrona* (9331 ft.). The *Latelhorn*, 1000 ft. above it on the N.E., is easy



# THE ITALIAN LAKES Map 2.



of access, and commands a noble panorama. There are also tracks from Antrona to Val Anzasca (Rte. 120).]

At Pallanzeno a road turns off rt. to Pié di Muléra and Val Anzasca. Monte Rosa is seen for a moment from the high road.

*Vogogna* (Inn: Corona, fair). The Tosa, here crossed above the confluence of the Anza, is navigable in spite of its rapidity; the barges are towed up by double teams of 6 or 8 horses on each bank.

[At Cuzzago a carriage-road to Pallanza branches E., passing the beautiful *Lago di Mergozzo*.]

Near *Ornavasso* (H. d'Italie) are the white marble quarries which supplied the stone for Milan Cathedral. A castle of the Visconti is seen above.

At *Gravellona* a large bridge crosses the Strona, a stream which drains the *Lago d'Orta* and sets in motion several cotton mills. A carriage-road, running up its l. bank, leads, in 4 m., to the lake of Orta at *Omegna* (Rte. 118).

Here the road to *Pallanza* branches off (see below), whilst the main road continues to

*Furiolo* (Inn: Leone d'Oro, attentive landlord). Here *Lago Maggiore* bursts into view, with the *Isola Madre*, the northernmost of the Borromean Islands, in the distance. A little further are numerous quarries of a beautiful rose granite, which derives its colour from the prevalence of felspar. It cleaves into thin slabs. The telegraph posts are made of granite. Felspar is obtained here in beautiful flesh-coloured crystals.

*Baveno* (Inns: H. Bellevue, a magnificent building, with a garden reaching to the lake; H. Beaurivage, new and good, cheaper). Baveno is beautifully situated on the shore of the lake and at the foot of Monte Motterone, the walks on the sides of which are very pretty and less inclosed by walls than is usual in Italy. There are good rowing-boats to be hired. The tasteful *Villa Clara*, perhaps the finest on *Lago Maggiore*, has been built by Charles Henfrey, Esq., C.E., on a terrace above Baveno. It was

occupied in 1879 by Queen Victoria. The liberality of Mr. Henfrey has provided for the benefit of his countrymen an *English Church*, of elegant design, in the Lombard style (Mr. Pullan, architect), and original in plan. It is a domed octagon, supported on marble pillars and richly decorated within. It was finished 1873. The Simplon road is carried along the shore of the lake past *Stresa* and *Arona*; but, as most travellers take the steamers at *Fariolo* or *Baveno*, the rest of the road is described under the head *Lago Maggiore* (Rte. 112).

*Borromean Islands*.—The indispensable excursion is a visit to the far-famed Borromean islands, which lie scattered about the deep bay of Baveno, and are picturesque objects in every view. The steamers touch at the *Isola Bella*. It takes 25 minutes to row from Baveno to the *Isola Bella* (boat there and back 5 fr., or 2 fr. an hr.).

*Isola Bella* (Inn: Delfino, very fair) belongs to Count Borromeo, who resides a part of the year in the vast palace. An ancestor of the family, in 1671, converted this bare and barren slate-rock, which lifted itself a few feet above the lake, into a beautiful garden, teeming with the vegetation of the tropics. It consists of 10 terraces, rising in a pyramidal form one above another, and lined with statues, vases, obelisks, and black cypresses. Upon these, as upon the hanging-gardens of Babylon, flourish in the open air, not merely the orange, citron, myrtle, and pomegranate, but aloes, cactuses, and the camphor-tree (of which there is a specimen 40 ft. high), and this within a day's journey of the Lapland climate of the Simplon, and within view of Alpine snows.

The proverbial disagreement of doctors is nothing in comparison to the discord of travellers on the merits of this island. To *Simond* the sight of the island at a distance suggested the idea of "a huge Périgord pie, stuck round with the heads of woodcocks

and partridges;" *Matthers* extols it as "the magic creation of labour and taste . . . a fairy-land, which might serve as a model for the gardens of Calypso;" *Saussure* calls it "un magnifique caprice, une pensée grandiose, une espèce de création;" *Gibbon* "an enchanted palace, a work of the fairies, in a lake accompanied with mountains;" while *Brockedon* sternly pronounces it as "worthy only of a rich man's misplaced extravagance, and of the taste of a confectioner." To the taste of the present century there is much that may seem misplaced; but, for a traveller fresh from the north, this creation of art, with its aromatic groves, starting out of the rocks—and, above all, its glorious situation, bathed by the dark blue waters of the lake, reflecting the distant snows of the Alps—cannot fail to afford pleasure.

Every handful of mould on the island was originally brought from a distance, and requires to be constantly renewed. It is probable that its foundation of slate-rock favours the growth of tender plants by long retaining the heat of a noonday sun; in addition to this, the terraces are boarded over during winter, and the plants protected from frost by stoves beneath. The orange and lemon blossoms perfume the air to some distance.

A bay-laurel, once of gigantic size, now a mere stump, is pointed out for a scar on its bark, where Napoleon, it is said, cut the word "battaglia," a short time before the battle of Marengo. The inscription has disappeared.

The *Palace*, which, with the gardens, is liberally shown to strangers, contains two portraits of *Beltraffio*, pictures by *Procaccini*, the *Charity of Andrea Sacchi*, and 50 landscapes by *Peter Molyn*, better known as *Tempesta*. In the *Chapel* are 3 fine monuments of the *Borromeo* family, removed from Milan at the time of the Cisalpine republic: one was constructed to hold the relics of *Sta. Giustina*, an ancestress of the family; another, on the rt. of the altar, is erroneously attributed to *Ant. Busti*.

These monuments are all probably by *Amadeo*, the sculptor of the monument of *Colleoni* at Bergamo (1490). The large unfinished building which separates the two wings was intended for a theatre, but has never been covered in. At the level of the lake is a suite of grottos, encrusted with shells and pebbles. At present the palace and gardens present a somewhat dilapidated appearance.

*Isola dei Pescatori* is a small island near *Isola Bella*. On it is a village of poor but picturesque houses, a large church, &c. The inhabitants are fishermen.

The *Isola Madre* is well worth a visit (fee 1 fr.). From its greater distance from the mountains, which screen the sun earlier from the others, it enjoys a milder climate in winter. The plants of New Holland grow luxuriantly out of doors; the two species of tea are generally in flower in October; the *Chilian Araucaria* here attains a great size. On the island are many pheasants, a rare sight in Italy, these birds being as it were imprisoned, from their inability by flight to gain the opposite shore.

The *Monte Motterone* or *Margozzolo*, rising behind *Baveno*, commands a fine view of the Alps, the *Lago Maggiore* and Italian plains. Donkeys are kept for the ascent. On foot it takes 3½ hrs. from *Baveno*, mounting at first through forest, and then by heathery slopes, to reach the top, 4893 ft. above the sea. You may descend the long slope on the opposite side to *Orta* in 3 hrs., and return by *Omegna* and the high road; or, if bound to *Varallo*, sleep at *Orta*, and proceed next day by the exquisite *Col di Colma*. (See Rte. 118.)

For *Lago Maggiore*, see next route.

## ROUTE 112.

BELLINZONA TO LOCARNO (RAILWAY)—  
LAGO MAGGIORE TO ARONA.

The Swiss ports of *Magadino* and *Locarno* are nearly opposite to each

other at the N. end of the Lago Maggiore. It is 9 m. from Bellinzona to Magadino, and about  $12\frac{1}{2}$  to Locarno.

The valley of the Ticino between Bellinzona and the lake is a broad plain, from which the mountains recede to a considerable distance. The country is highly cultivated, the slopes covered with vineyards, but near the lake the bottom becomes marshy and is unhealthy.

[To Magadino.

The road is the same as that to Lugano as far as *Valdenazzo* (Rte. 114). It then keeps at the foot of the mountains to

Magadino (*Inns*: H. Bellevue; Poste). The unhealthiness of this place has been exaggerated. In the months of September and October, fevers are at times prevalent owing to the neighbouring delta of the Ticino; but much has been done to remedy this evil, and effectually.

Magadino, after the opening of the Railway between Turin, Genoa, and Arona, and the establishment of Lake steamers, became a place of commercial importance. Since the construction of the railroad to Locarno, it has lost its trade, and, having been much injured by floods, is sinking to a village.

*Steamer* once daily, in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hrs., to Arona.]

To Locarno. Rly. 1 hr. Carriage and 2 horses in 2 hrs. (15 fr.). The rail keeps close company with the Magadino road as far as Giubraio, the future junction of the line to Lugano. Crossing the Ticino, it approaches the head of the lake.

*Gordola Stat.* Here the exquisitely blue torrent of Val Verzasca pours out of a gorge. The line runs along the shore, through villas and vineyards, to Locarno. [The road is hilly, but beautiful. It crosses the Ticino by a bridge of 14 arches. In the autumn the river is very small, but flooded in the spring, and kept in by a dyke called Riparo Tondo, constructed by the French under Francis I. The road now leaves the flat, runs

under Monte Carasso, and commands a view of the opposite mountains, including the Monte Cenere, and the valley beyond Bellinzona to the snowy Alps. It then passes through a wall constructed by the Swiss (since 1848) as a fortification. At the bridge of Sementina, a torrent issuing out of a ravine on the rt. forms a pretty waterfall. The latter part of the route, along the shore of the lake, is delightful, winding amongst villas, chestnut-trees, mulberry-trees, and vines, and commanding exquisite views.]

Locarno — Germ. *Luggarus* — (*Inns*: Grand H. de Locarno, good, a large new house; Eng. *Ch. S.*; Corona, by the lake). This is one of the three capitals of Canton Tessin; it has 3000 Inhab., and once contained many more, but has decayed since the 15th century. It is beautifully situated on the margin of the lake, on which it has a little port, at the foot of wooded cliffs surmounted by the church and convent of Madonna del Sasso, the most picturesque of monastic groups, and near the entrance of the converging valleys of Verzasca, Maggia, Onsernone, and Centovalli. The groves of orange and lemon, the tall white steeples on the hill-sides, and the little white chapels peering out from among the trellised vines, and mirrored in the glassy lake, are all characteristic features of an Italian landscape, even though, as far as frontier lines are concerned, we are still in Switzerland. The spot is one of singular beauty, and greatly to be preferred to Magadino by travellers requiring to halt for the night near the head of Lago Maggiore, previous to embarking, or willing to remain for a few days to explore the neighbouring valleys.

The *Government House*, in the midst of a square planted with shrubberies, was built by a joint-stock company for the sittings of the grand council. In the old castle are some antique rooms with beautiful wood-carvings. The *Madonna del Sasso*, 20 min. walk above the town, is well worth a visit. The

path is formed into a Calvary, inferior to those at Domo d'Ossola and Varallo, but beautifully laid out. The portico of the church has an exquisite view over the lake, and entrance of the valley of the Ticino, whose winding course may be traced flashing in the sun. Moreover the church contains paintings by Luini, stuccoes, bas-reliefs, &c. From this a footpath leads in 10 min. to the *Monte della Trinità*, commanding an extensive panorama. On Sunday, Jan. 9, 1863, a portion of the roof of the parish ch. (S. Antonio), being loaded with snow, gave way, fell upon the congregation and crushed to death 47 persons, chiefly women.

The market at Locarno, held once a fortnight, exhibits a singular mixture of costumes.

In former days the intolerance of the Romish priesthood acted prejudicially to the interests of Locarno, compelling those among the citizens who had adopted the Reformed faith to emigrate. In March, 1553, 116 persons, who had refused to purchase the privilege of remaining by the sacrifice of their religion, were banished by a decree of the Swiss Diet, and quitted their homes for ever. With them went industry and prosperity; they settled at Zürich, transferring thither the manufacture of silk, which is now of such importance to that city. The Orelli, the well-known publishers of Zürich, are a Locarno family. The day after the sentence of exile had been pronounced, the papal nuncio arrived with two inquisitors: he indignantly objected to the mildness of the sentence, and urged the deputies, under pain of the pope's displeasure, to couple with it confiscation of the goods of the heretics, and separation of their children, in order that they might be educated by the priests. To this demand, however, the deputies did not yield obedience. The doctrines of the Reformation were preached here first by Beccaria, a Milanese monk, about 1534: he was soon expelled, and took refuge in the Val Misocco.

There were 21 convents in Canton

Tessin, but nearly all of them are now suppressed.

There is an excellent road along the W. shore of the lake to Pallanza, 4 hrs.' drive.

To Domo d'Ossola by Val Vigezzo (Rte. 113).

Val Maggia, Val Verzasca, and Val Onsernone are described in Rte. 64.

#### LAGO MAGGIORE.

Excellent Steamers run between Locarno and Arona 3 times a day, in 4 to 5 hrs., calling at most of the villages. Good restaurant on board. Large parties may engage of the Steamboat Company small private steamers for excursions on the Lake.

The mark † below indicates that the steamer calls at a pier. At the other villages a boat takes off passengers.

Row-boats may be hired at any of the ports on the lake. N.B. Ask for the tariff, or bargain beforehand with the boatmen.

The *Lago Maggiore*, the *Lacus Verbanus* of the Romans (Germ. *Laugen See*), is about 40 m. long, about 3 m. wide, except at its greatest breadth (6 m.) opposite Baveno, 646 ft. above the sea, and in places upwards of 2600 ft. deep. Its prevailing winds are the *Tramontana* from the N., and the *Inverna*, which blows by day, from the S. Only a small portion at its N. extremity, which is often called Lago di Locarno, belongs to Switzerland. About 7 m. S. of Locarno, the Italian frontier commences. The navigation is free to both states. The chief rivers by which the lake is fed are the Ticino, flowing from the St. Gothard; the Maggia, from the valley of the same name; the Tresa, from the Lago Lugano; and the Toccia, or Tosa, from Val Formazza, by Domo d'Ossola. The scenery of the upper end is bold and mountainous, and at the same time diversified by a succession of striking and beautiful features. The stately beauty of the hill-forms round the bay of Baveno (to call by that name the W. arm, containing the Borromean Islands) is

hardly equalled even in this beautiful region; but, towards the S. and E., the shores are less lofty, subsiding gradually into the plain of Lombardy. The fishery is the property of the Borromeo family, and is let for a large sum.

In 1848 Garibaldi and his friends seized the only two steamers then on the lake, armed them, and for two months cruised about, levying contributions on the Austrian towns and on the Sardinian convents, and the lake was again the scene of fighting in 1859.

The voyage down the lake is very delightful, and the scenery exquisite. The mountain sides are so precipitous that there were until lately no roads along them. Villages and churches are, however, perched on the heights; and wherever a deposit has been formed in the lake by a torrent, a village will be found.

Beyond the delta of the Maggia is *Ascona*, on the W. shore, surmounted by a castle.

*Brissago*, W., a charming spot, conspicuous with its white houses, and avenue of cypress leading to the ch.; its inhabitants are wealthy and industrious. Terrace rises above terrace against the hill-side; and the vine, fig, olive, pomegranate, and myrtle flourish in the open air. About 1 m. beyond this the Swiss territory ends.

†*Canobbio*, W. (*Inns*: Bissone, fair; H. Canobbio), situated at the entrance of the Piedmontese Val Canobbina (Rte. 113), at the entrance to which stands a large establishment, "La Salute," with a noble view of the head of the lake, frequented chiefly by Italians (closed 1876). The church was designed by Bramante, and contains an altarpiece reputed the finest work of *Gaudenzio Ferrari*—Christ carrying the Cross. The island off *Cannero*, on which is a ruined castle of the Borromeos, was, in the 15th cent., the resort of 5 robber-brothers named Mazzarda, who committed depredations along the shores of the lake. Before reaching *Uggello* is the villa of the Marquis d'Azeglio, and just below it that of Prince Poniatowski.

*Maccagno*, E.

†*Luino*, E. (see Rte. 115), for Lugano and Como.

†*Laveno*, E. (*Inns*: Posta, best, fair; Il Moro). Hence a diligence runs daily to the rly. at Varese, 13 m. (*Handbook to N. Italy*, Rte. 17). Laveno is situated in a beautiful little bay, which was strongly fortified by the Austrians when that side of the lake belonged to Austria. Some distance S. of the town is *Santa Caterina in Sasso*, a church very beautifully situated. In it is a piece of rock, weighing above a ton, which some 400 years ago fell, and was caught in a very curious manner. Above the town is a mountain, *Sasso del Ferro* (3340 ft.), the view from which is magnificent. The steamer now turns across the lake to

†*Intra* (*Inns*: Vitello d'Oro; Leone d'Oro); 4000 Inhab. A thriving town, with manufactories of glass, cotton, and silk, and a foundry. The torrent from the Val Intrasca affords abundant water-power.

[From here *Val Intrasca*, an unvisited valley, offers a charming by-way to Domo d'Ossola.]

A small island belonging to Prince Borromeo lies off the point before reaching

*Pallanza* (*Inns*: Grand H. Pallanza, one of the best hotels on the Lakes; H. de la Poste, very good; *Eng. Ch. S.*); about 4000 Inhab. Here the governor of the province resides. The conspicuous building above the town is a large model prison for male convicts. There is a nursery-garden of some celebrity close to the town. The Borromean Islands may be visited from Pallanza (see Rte. 111). A good carriage-road runs hence to Gravelona on the Simplon road. Visit the beautiful *Lago Mergozzo* on the road to Domo; take provisions.

*Fariolo*, W. (see Rte. 111).

†*Baveno*, W. (see Rte. 111.)

†*Stresa*, W. (*Inns*: H. des Iles Borromées, a most agreeable residence; H. Royal, another large hotel; H. Milan, good; *Eng. Ch. S.*). This place is beautifully situated, and is by some preferred to Baveno. Villa Pallavicini has a fine garden.

*Belgirate*, W., and *Lesa*, W., pretty villages, remarkable for the number of villas with terraces and gardens in front. The colossal statue of *S. Carlo Borromeo* appears on the hill above the road on the rt., before reaching

†*Arona*, W. (*Inns*: Albergo d'Italia, good, with garden; Alb. Reale, good and cheap), an ancient and rapidly improving town of about 3000 Inhab., built on the margin of the lake; the principal street is so narrow that only one carriage can pass. The Simplon road runs through the upper part of the town. This is the port from which the steamers start.

The station of the railway to *Novara* (about 1 hr., is close to the steamboat pier. This railway, and the improvements of the harbour, have made Arona the entrepôt between Genoa and Switzerland, and a very thriving place. *Rail* from Novara to Turin in 2½ to 3½ hrs.; direct to Genoa by Alessandria in 5½ hrs.; to Milan in 2½ hrs.

The principal *Ch.* (*Santa Maria*) contains a very beautiful picture attributed to Gaudenzio Ferrari—a Holy Family, with shutters, bearing figures of saints, and the portrait of a Countess Borromeo, by whom it was presented to the church; it is retouched. San Carlo Borromeo was born in the old castle above Arona, 1538; destroyed by the French 1797.

On a hill, about half an hour's walk from the town, stands the *Colossal Statue* of *San Carlo Borromeo*, 66 ft. high, and placed on a pedestal 40 ft. high. The head, hands, and feet, alone, are cast in bronze; the rest of the figure is formed of sheets of beaten copper, arranged round a pillar of rough masonry which forms the support. The statue was erected, 1697, by subscription, principally contributed by the Borromean family. It is possible to enter the interior and to mount up into the head. The ascent is by means of two ladders tied together provided by a man who lives hard by, resting on the pedestal, and reaching up to the skirt of the robe. It is possible to climb into the head,

which will hold 3 persons at once. The statue has nothing but size to recommend it.

Carlo Borromeo (1538-84), a nephew of Pius IV., became Archbishop of Milan and a cardinal at 22. He was a man of singular spiritual energy and an ardent Churchman, and appears in Swiss history as a fierce opponent of every kind of religious revolt. He made great use of the Jesuits, and increased their establishments throughout his diocese. He is best and most worthily remembered for his heroic and self-forgetful exertions during the plague and famine at Milan.

From the top of *la Rocca*, a hill above Arona, there is a fine view. The geologist will find near the quarries of limestone (*Dolomite*) an interesting contact of the magnesian limestone and red porphyry.

Opposite Arona, on the other side of the lake, stands the *Castle of Angera*, a fief of the Borromeos, on a hill of a similar limestone, and at its foot the neat modern village of the same name. The castle dates from Giovanni Visconti. Some frescoes represent events in the life of his father, Ottone Visconti.

Remains of lake-dwellings have been found near Mercurago, 1 m. S. of Arona.

*Diligences* daily to Domo d'Ossola and Brieg over the Simplon, and to Orta by good carriage-road (*Rte. 118*), 13 m. (2½ to 3 hrs. drive) over a low pass.

*Railway* direct (2½ hrs.) by Gallarate to

MILAN (*Inns*: H. Cavour; H. Comfortable; H. de la Ville). See *Hand-book for North Italy*.

## ROUTE 113.

DOMO D'OSSOLA (A) TO LOCARNO, BY VAL VIGEZZO. (B) TO CANOBIO, BY VAL CANOBINA.

The valleys which offer a direct way from Domo to the N. end of

Lago Maggiore are little frequented by strangers, although they abound in fine scenery.

A. To Locarno by Val Vigezzo.

From Domo to Locarno the distance is about 30 m. There is a good carriage-road up Val Vigezzo to the pilgrimage shrine of Re, which will probably ultimately be carried to Locarno. Val Vigezzo opens into Val d'Ossola about half a mile above Domo. The traveller crosses the Tosa in a ferry, and shortly begins to ascend through a picturesque defile. The upper valley, open and sunny, contains many handsome villas belonging to natives, who have returned to end their days amid the scenes of their youth, after having made fortunes in business. The snows of Monte Rosa shine in the distance. The watershed between the streams flowing to the Tosa and the lake is not a well-defined col, but a table-land, on which is situated the principal village—

11 m. *Sta. Maria Maggiore*, 2710 ft. (Leone d'Oro), nearly 3 hrs. in a char up-hill from Domo.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. further is *Mulesco*, another large village, and 2 m. beyond, at the pilgrimage shrine of Re, the road ends. 1 hr. further, near Orgia, the Swiss frontier is crossed, and the traveller passes from Val Vigezzo to Val Centovalli. It is a walk of about  $3\frac{1}{4}$  hrs., by a beautiful but rough path from Re to

*Intragna* (Bustallo's Inn), beautifully situated. Here a carriage-road begins. A little below this village the Melezza torrent joins that from the Val Onsernone, and about 2 miles farther the joint stream unites with the Maggia at the Ponte Brolla, 3 m. from

Locarno (see Rte. 112).

B. To Canobbio by Val Canobbina.

From Malesco a carriage-road has been constructed over a low pass to Finero, a hamlet in an upland basin at the head of Val Canobbina. A short distance beyond, the road avoids a long circuit by a bold tunnel, and runs on a terrace above a deep ravine to the hamlet of Orasso. Here it descends by steep zigzags to the stream. From this point to the lake

the road penetrates a series of romantic and richly-wooded defiles, finally emerging at "La Salute," a large bathing establishment, in a cool situation, with a fine view of the head of the lake (closed 1876). A mile further is Canobbio (Rte. 112). The whole drive is most beautiful, and much to be preferred to the high road to Baveno as an approach to Lago Maggiore from this side.

From Malesco it is about 16 m. to Canobbio by road.

## ROUTE 114.

### BELLINZONA TO LUGANO AND COMO. MONTE GENEROSO.

|                           |        |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Bellinzona                | Miles. |
| Lugano (road) . . . . .   | 20     |
| Como (railroad) . . . . . | 20     |

To Lugano,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  Swiss posts = 20 Eng. m. Although the distance is so small, it will occupy 4 hrs.

Diligences daily to Lugano (4 fr. 20), thence rail to Como.

On quitting Bellinzona by the Lugano gate, the dry bed of a torrent called *Dragonata* is passed. As its name would imply, it is at times a scourge; it carried off in 1768 the Franciscan convent outside the town, and threatens similar injury.

There are many country-houses on the outskirts, and high upon the hills buildings, now deserted, to which in ancient times the inhabitants of Bellinzona used to resort for safety when the plague was raging.

The road turns out of the valley of the Ticino at Cadenazzo (Rte. 112), 5 m. below Bellinzona, and begins to ascend the *Monte Cuore*, a steep mountain, whose sides, shady with walnut and chestnut wood, are scaled by numerous zigzags, commanding exquisite views of the valley of the Ticino and head of Lago Maggiore. The top is reached in about 2 hrs. from Bellinzona. (Renfort to Caserma.) From midway up the ascent a fine view is obtained over the N. extremity of the Lago Maggiore. At *Riviera* the road falls in

with the river Agno, which rises about 12 m. to the E., at the foot of *Monte Camoghè* (sometimes ascended for its fine view), and follows it through Bironico to Lamone; here the road turns L., and again ascends a slight eminence, whence an interesting prospect opens out on the opposite descent towards Lugano. In front expands its beautiful lake, backed by mountains; and, on the rt., is Monte Salvatore, with the chapel on its conical summit.

*Lugano*—Germ. *Lauis*—(see Rte. 115). This is the present terminus of the railway from Como, intended to form part of the St. Gothard line.

The station is high up in the town of Lugano. After leaving it, a deep ravine is crossed by a bridge; there is then a tunnel, half a mile long, under part of Monte San Salvatore. The railway then runs by the side of the lake to

*Melide Stat.*

At *Melide* a promontory projects into the lake, from the point of which a stone causeway 2400 ft. long has been thrown across, connected with either shore by a stone bridge—thus replacing an inconvenient ferry to

*Bissone*. It cost more than a million francs. *Melide* is the birthplace of *Fontana*, the architect, who, in 1586, moved the Egyptian obelisk from the Coliseum at Rome to the square in front of the Vatican.

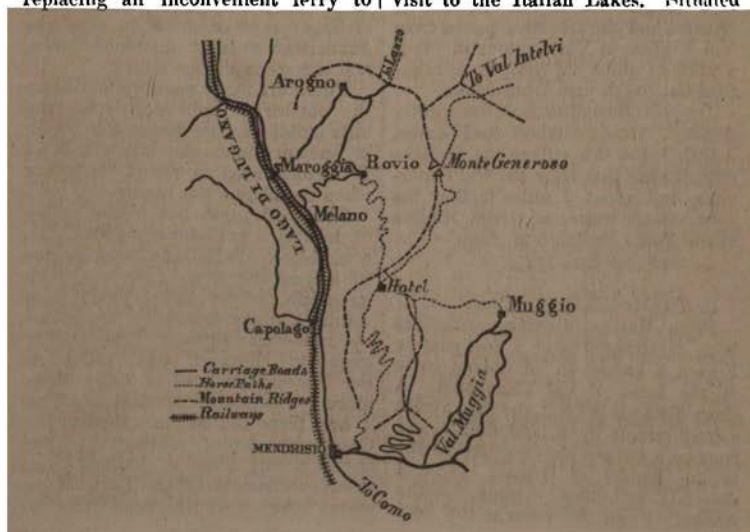
*Maroggia Stat.*, for *Rovio* (see below).

*Capolago Stat.*

*Mendrisio Stat.* (Inn: H. Mendrisio, comfortable. Horses, charrs, and chaises à porteurs for Monte Generoso) (2500 Inhab.), a busy little town, with manufactories of paper, silk and hats, and a large hospital for the poor. It is supposed to be the cradle of the once-powerful Milanese family *Delle Torre*, or *Torriani*. The wine of the country is stored in mountain caves, which form capital cellars. To the sulphureous baths of *Stabbio* is a drive of 20 min. [A very beautiful country road leads over low hills, with superb views of Monte Rosa, to Varese (about 13 miles).]

#### ASCENT OF MONTE GENEROSO.

The ascent of this mountain is an almost indispensable supplement to a visit to the Italian Lakes. Situated



between the Lakes of Como, Lugano, and the Lombard plain, it commands not only a fine mountain panorama, but a number of picturesque views hardly to be equalled in Europe for extent, brilliancy, and splendour.

The mountain is accessible from many directions. The most frequented path starts from Mendrisio (mules, 6 francs; char, 10 fr.; chaise-à-porteur, 16 fr.). A good bridle-path, just passable for small charrs, leads for an hour through a narrow glen, and then climbs steeply through thickets of laburnums, reaching, in 2½ hrs.,

Dr. Pasta's *H. and Pension du Monte Generoso*, a large, excellent, and moderate house, *Eng. Ch. S.*, open from May to October, and situated 4000 ft. above the sea, with a S. exposure. The mean day temperature of the 3 summer months has been ascertained by 3 daily observations during 14 years, as follows: June, 56 Fahrenheit; July, 61; August, 60. Private sitting-rooms can be had, and arrangements made for a prolonged stay. Pension, 9 to 12 fr. a day, rooms included. There is a telegraph to the hotel. The house stands above the head of the glen by which the traveller has mounted, and on a level with the ridge overhanging the Lake of Lugano. In clear weather, the whole Lombard plain, bounded by the Apennines, is visible from the terrace in front of the hotel. Monte Viso cuts clearly against the W. horizon, or shines like a jewel in the morning light; the cathedral of Milan shows as a white speck in the centre of the blur which marks the position of the city. Five minutes' walk to a brow N. of the house reveals a still more beautiful prospect, possibly the most beautiful in the whole Alpine chain. Underfoot lies the still lake of Lugano; while beyond, seen over miles of waving rich-coloured crest and hollow, tower the 7 peaks of Monte Rosa—a spectacle never to be forgotten. This view should be seen at sunrise, when the glow is on the mountain, and transparent mists curl up from the lake.

The house is surrounded by beech-copses, and there are many tolerably

level walks in its vicinity. There is a second way from Mendrisio to the *Inn*, 1 hr. longer, but likely to supersede the present mule-path, since it is a good car-road to within a mile of the door. Its completion has been retarded by some local jealousy. From Castel San Pietro, a village 2 m. E. of Mendrisio, a series of steep but well-constructed zigzags mount the face of the spur which forms the W. boundary of Val Muggia. The crest once reached the road follows it, now on one side, now on the other, commanding views of the most exquisite beauty, and passing near several groups of farmhouses sheltered by noble chestnut-groves. This spur affords a long level walk and should be followed to its extreme brow by every visitor, whether he descends to the plain or not. A third but circuitous way from Mendrisio or Como is by Val Muggia, a long winding dale, abounding in picturesque landscapes and villages. There are winding roads on both sides of the valley to Muggio (an agreeable excursion from Mendrisio), whence a steep path leads up to Dr. Pasta's hotel.

One of the pleasantest routes to the hotel is from the *Maroggia Station* on the Lake of Lugano. Hence a road mounts to the upland village of *Rovio*, beautifully situated on a plateau covered with chestnut-wood and maize-fields (Hotel *Rovio*, good). [From *Rovio* a charming road leads to the neighbouring village of *Arvigo*, whence a direct carriage-road leads down to the shores of the lake.] Hence a steep but well-kept mule-path climbs in 2 hrs., in two flights of zigzags, through broken cliffs to the shoulder behind Dr. Pasta's. This route is in the shade in the morning.

From Dr. Pasta's it is an easy walk of 1 hr. 15 min. to the highest point of Monte Generoso, a rocky crest crowning high, steep-sided downs (5561 ft.). The view is, of course, panoramic. A small portion of Como and Maggiore and the Lakes of Varese, Canobbio, and Monate are in sight. The chain of the Alps extends from the Maritime Alps through the Grand Paradis to

Monte Rosa and the Saasgrat. These are the absorbing objects, but to the N. the ranges of Ticino are well seen, with the Oberland peaks rising with unexpected boldness in the background. The Punta Trubinesca and Disgrazia are the most conspicuous of the Bernina group. The Orteler and Adamello are hidden by the Bergamasque ranges.

In June the upper portion of Monte Generoso is a garden of wildflowers. The *Narcissus Poeticus* and the peony scent or colour the slopes round the inn, and laburnum-blossoms festoon the track below it.

Amateur botanists should be cautious how they venture into the gullies on the Lugano side of the peak; they are very steep, and a fall would in many places be fatal.

From the top there are easy paths, leading in 3 to 4 hrs. through Val Intelvi to Argegno on the Lake of Como, or Osteno on the E. arm of the Lake of Lugano. These villages are connected by a country road.

On the N. flank of Monte Generoso, accessible by a direct mule-path from the Lake of Lugano, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  m. from the village of Lanzo, a large Inn and Pension (Albergo Belvedere) has been recently opened.

*Chiasso Stat.* This is the last village in Switzerland, and soon afterwards the frontier is passed and a long tunnel traversed to

COMO STAT (*Inns*: Italia; Volta), whence rly. to Milan. (See *Hand-book for North Italy*.)

### ROUTE 115.

BAVENO TO MENAGGIO, BY LUINO AND THE LAKE OF LUGANO.

| Baveno                      | Miles. |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Luino (steamer) . . .       | 15     |
| Lugano (carriage) . . .     | 13     |
| Porto Cervo (steamer) . . . | 8      |
| Menaggio (carriage) . . .   | 8      |

This is a very beautiful route, combining in a single excursion the

finest portions of the 3 lakes, Maggiore, Lugano, and Como.

Travellers coming from Turin or Genoa may take the steamer at Arona; those from the St. Gothard may start from Locarno; while those who have crossed the Simplon, or who arrive from the valleys of Monte Rosa and the Lake of Orta, will make Baveno the point of departure. For the voyage from any of these places to Luino, see Rte. 112.

*Luino* (*Inns*: H. Simplon, clean and good; Vittoria; Posta; La Beccaccia, fair), a small village, on the E. shore of the Lago Maggiore, the birthplace of the painter Bernardino, called after it *Luini*. A carriage with 2 horses to Lugano costs 20 fr., 1-horse carriage 12 fr. *Diligences* correspond with the steamers which touch here, and on board the steamers is a post agent, from whom carriages for Lugano can be engaged.

The drive is exceedingly beautiful, running through a hilly but very fertile and wonderfully well-cultivated country. It takes nearly 3 hrs. The road ascends directly the very steep hills behind Luino, and commands a fine prospect of the lake and Monte Rosa. It then follows the rt. bank of the Tresa, upwards, at a considerable height above that river, through a beautiful valley, passing the Swiss frontier and the Italian custom-house about 3 m. from Luino.

*Ponte Tresa*, a village of 365 inhabitants, is named from a stone bridge which leads to the rt., away from our road, across the river into Lombardy. The village is prettily situated on a bay of the Lago Lugano, so completely land-locked as to seem a distinct lake. Steamers now run from here to Lugano. Another of the winding reaches of the lake stretches N. about half a mile on the E. of our road, as far as

*Agno*, a village of 600 Inhab., at the mouth of the Agno, or Bedaggio. Another steep ascent is then made to *Muzzano*, where the village and little lake of that name present a very pretty scene.

The town and lake of Lugano are

soon afterwards seen below, and a descent by steep zigzags leads to

*Lugano* (Inns: H. du Parc (Eng. Ch. S.), pleasantly situated in a large garden; H. Beau Séjour, same management, outside the town. Pension, 6 fr. a-day; H. Bellevue, close to the lake; H. Washington, formerly H. du Lac. This building for six out of every eighteen years, is used as the seat of government of the canton. Albergo Svizzero; Couronne).

Lugano, one of the 3 chief towns of the Canton Tessin, and the largest, most thriving in trade, and most extending in population, contains 6024 Inhab., and is charmingly situated on the margin of its lake. The hills and mountains abound in all the productions of the luxuriant vegetation of Italy; and numerous villas are scattered along their slopes, embowered among vineyards and gardens, and backed by the foliage of the umbrageous walnut.

The Church of *San Lorenzo* is planted on an eminence, commanding a fine view (close to the rly. stat.). The fabric is ancient, and traces of the original building are to be seen in the clerestory, outside. The façade is richly adorned with sculpture.

Close to the H. Washington is the Ch. of *Santa Maria degli Angeli*, founded in 1499, containing remarkable paintings in fresco by *Bernardino Luini*; particularly a Crucifixion of large size covering the wall which divides the choir from the body of the ch. It is one of the finest works of the Lombard school. Below are figures, life-size, of S. Sebastian and S. Roch (? a portrait of Luini): A Madonna with the 2 children, in fresco, removed to a side-chapel on the rt., is a work of great beauty and refinement. The Last Supper, in 3 compartments. These paintings were almost the last works of Luini, who died 1530.

The Post-office is in the Government House (Palazzo Civico): near it is the Liceo (Cantonal College), the Theatre, and the Bank of Italian Switzerland.

The *Giardino Gabrini*, on the margin [Stritz.]

of the lake, contains a statue (overpraised), *La Desolazione*, by the sculptor Vincenzo Vela, a native of Lugano, who modelled the statue of William Tell on the fountain before the H. du Parc. The Belvedere of the *Villa Enderlin*, on the summit of the hill, commands a beautiful view.

Steamers twice a day to Porlezza, on the way to Lago di Como, Menaggio, Bellagio, Cadenabbia; and to Ponte Tresa, calling at Porto for Varese (omnibus, 10 miles). On Tuesdays additional boats.

Diligence daily to Luino, to Bellinzona (Rte. 114), and rly. to Como (Rte. 114). The railway station is above the town.

Boats on the lake, with 1 boatman, 2 fr. for the hour; with 2, 3 fr. Without a man, 1½ fr.

There are considerable factories for throwing silk grown in Canton Tessin; and Lugano further derives activity and prosperity from being the entrepôt of goods shipped across the lake from Italy, to be transported over the Alps, and vice versa. A large fair is held here on the 9th October.

*Monte Caprino*, the mountain opposite Lugano, is penetrated by grottoes, which have been converted into cellars, called *Cantine*. Numerous small houses for the sale of the wine are built over them; so that at a distance they have the appearance of a village. They are much resorted to in summer by the townspeople on account of their coolness, but are not worth visiting.

Excursions. — a. Ascent of *Monte Genovoso* (Rte. 114), sleeping at the excellent hotel near the summit. Those who do not ascend the mountain to Dr. Pasta's, may take a beautiful drive by the villages under its W. cliffs; Rovio (a good Pension) and Arogno.

b. Ascent of *Monte San Salvatore*, an easy walk or ride of 3 hrs. there and back. The road is that to Como for ¾ m., where a paved path diverges rt., passing the *Villa Marchino* on the ascent to the village of Pazzallo. Here the path turns l., under the

*porte cochère* of a large house, and I again in 2 or 3 min. It is steep and stony, but not otherwise difficult to the summit, 3051 ft. above the sea, where, at a house just below the oratory, refreshments are to be had, but at a high price. The sweet-scented purple *cyclamen* covers the hill-side in the spring; in the autumn the *Daphne Cneorum*. Wooded nearly to the top, this mountain forms a promontory, washed on two sides by the L. of Lugano. The view extends over numerous other lakes, and is bounded by the snowy Alps. The distant prospect cannot be compared with those from the Motterone and Generoso, as it is limited in many directions by intervening mountains; but the view of the Monte Rosa chain, and the glimpses of more distant snowy peaks, heighten the effect of the beautiful scenery near at hand. On the summit is a pilgrimage chapel. The charge for a horse or mule is 6 fr., but more is often demanded, and a present (*briciolina*) to the guide is expected. It is a good plan for ladies to take a carriage to the beginning of the mule-path, and let it await their return, while they climb the hill on foot. Travellers should not leave the path, as the sides of the mountain are precipitous.

"Monte Salvatore stands amid the intricacies of the Lake of Lugano, and is, from a hundred points of view, its principal ornament—rising to a height of 2000 ft., and, on one side, nearly perpendicular. The ascent is toilsome, but the traveller who performs it will be amply rewarded. Splendid fertility, rich woods, and dazzling waters, seclusion and confinement of view contrasted with sea-like extent of plain, fading into the sky—and this again, in an opposite quarter, with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps—unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity than perhaps any other point in Europe, of so inconsiderable an elevation, commands."—*Wordsworth*.

The road to Como exhibits a phenomenon highly interesting to the geolo-

gist. About 10 minutes' walk beyond the promontory and ruin of the chapel of *San Martino* a compact smoke-grey limestone appears by the road-side, in beds about a foot thick. As we advance, we find the limestone traversed by small veins, lined with rhombs of dolomite; and farther on, these veins become fissures, the stratification ceases to be distinct, and, where the mountain is perpendicular, its face is formed entirely of dolomite. This becomes gradually purer and more white, towards Melide, where it is succeeded by a dark augite porphyry. The geologist Von Buch considered that the gas discharged from this latter igneous rock, at the time when the mountain was upheaved by volcanic forces, penetrated the limestone through fissures, and converted it into dolomite. The change in colour and substance, from a grey limestone to a white crystalline marble, like loaf-sugar, may be easily traced by the road-side.

c. A drive round *Monte Salvatore* by Figino, Morcote and Melide, 2½ hrs.; 2-horse carriage 11 fr. The road goes by *Pumbia*, where, in the front of the ch. is a statue by Vela in memory of a young rifle-volunteer, Francesco Calloni, who fell at Somma Campagna, July 24, 1848. On the hill to the rt. is the village of *Gentilino* and monastery of *S. Abbondio*. The road leads down a rich valley to the Agno arm of the lake at *Figino*. *Morcote* stands at the point of the promontory. The ch. and appendant buildings form a striking group high above the town, and are reached by 300 steps, with a statue to their builder, a local benefactor, in a niche at the bottom. The ch. has Lombardic remains and a stately campanile, and the view from it of the windings of the lake is of uncommon beauty. Six houses of *Morcote* sank into the lake Sept. 10, 1862. Thence the road leads to Melide.

d. Another charming drive is under the N. and W. slopes of *S. Salvatore* by *Carabbia* and *Ciona* to *Carona*. The views are of singular richness and beauty, especially when the Monte Rosa range is visible. About 1½ m.

from Carona, through park-like scenery and chestnut-woods, is the *Ch. of Madonna dell' Ongero*, commanding a glorious view. A wood-path leads down to *Torello*, a suppressed monastery with Romanesque church. *Figino* and the high-road lie  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. below.

*e. Ascent of Monte Bré and Monte Boglia.* Directly facing Lugano, on the N. shore, is *Castagnola*, with conspicuous white ch. tower, and above it Monte Bré, easily ascended from that point to which a boat may be taken. The path to the top, rather more than 3000 ft., passes the village of Bré. The descent can be made N. by *Pazzalino*; or the excursion can be prolonged to *Monte Boglia*, just 5000 ft. above the sea, and with a view little inferior to that from the *Generoso*. A path leads thence to *Oria*, on the N. shore of the *Porlezza* branch of the lake, where the steamer for Lugano may be caught at 1 P.M.

*f. A boat excursion may be made to Gandria*, a little beyond *Castagnola*, walking back by the cliff-path. The cactus, *Aloe* (*Agave Americana*), *Sweet-scented Bay*, and other plants of a warm climate, give the vegetation a thoroughly southern character. The *Pteris Cretica* is found growing in the crevices of the rocks. To go and return,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.

*g. A little beyond Gandria is Oria*, where the steamer stops. Thence walk, or take a boat to *S. Mamette*, and walk up the ravine to *Drano*, where there is a fine waterfall, and to *Puria*; descend and cross the ravine to *Castello*, perched on a summit, and return to *Oria* for the second steamer. From *Castello*, *Monte Boglia* may be ascended.

*h. On the S. shore of the lake is Osteno*, where the steamer stops. Here a singular ravine or *Orrido* (the local word for a gorge), accessible only by boat, well deserves a visit. It is the gorge of *Pfäfers* on a small scale. There are also some stalactite caverns. *Porlezza* is reached from *Osteno* in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles by carriage-road; and *Argegno*, on the lake of *Como*, by a very interesting route of 11 m. by *S. Fedele* and *Castiglione*. On the hill above

*Osteno*, near *Lanzo*, is a new Pension beautifully situated.

*i. Drive N. up the valley of the Cassarate to the convent of Bigorio*, which crowns a hill, 20 min. walk beyond the village of *Sala*, 9 m. from Lugano. The views and the Capuchin Convent interesting. Its ch. contains a picture ascribed to *Perino della Vaga*. You may return on foot along the heights by the village and chapel of *S. Bernardo*, and the villages *Comano* and *Porza*; or by carriage by the *Lake of Origgio*, and the villages *Cureglia*, *Vezia*, and *Massagno*.

The *Lago di Lugano* (called also *Ceresio*) is exceedingly irregular in shape, making several very acute bends, its greatest length is about 20 m. Its E. and W., and one of its S. arms, terminate in the Lombard territory.

The scenery is surpassingly beautiful, and has a character distinct from that of *Como* and *Maggiore* in being more rugged and uncultivated. It at the same time presents great variety; near Lugano the shores of the lake are as smiling, as frequently speckled with white villas and churches, and as richly fringed with vines, fig-trees, and walnut-groves, as the more garden-like borders of the *Lago di Como*; but, in penetrating its E. bay to *Porlezza*, the mountains assume a wild and precipitous outline, and the darker tints of the rock and oak copse furnish the predominating colour.

Steamers from Lugano to *Porlezza* once a day, in 1 hr., thence omnibus, in correspondence, to *Menaggio*. Those who wish to enjoy the scenery at their leisure will prefer a row-boat—charge with 1 rower 7 fr., with 2 rowers 12 fr.

*Porlezza* (H. du Lac). Here is the Italian custom-house. The examination of luggage occupies some time. An abundance of carriages for *Menaggio* are in waiting for the passengers, and one can be previously secured on board the steamers (2 horses, 12 fr.). The road is good and very beautiful. Passing on the rt. the little lake of *Piano*, it ascends to a considerable

height, whence there is a glorious view over the lake of Como, and then descends by steep zigzags to

*Menaggio* (*Inn*: Grand Hotel Victoria, new and handsome; Corona), a small village beautifully placed on the shore of the lake of Como. Those who are going to Bellaggio may wait for the steamer, but had much better take a rowing boat. A carriage-road has been carried on to Cadenabbia (Rte. 116).

Near is the handsome *Villa Vigoni*, built by the Frankfort banker *Mylius*, with some good modern statues, and a mausoleum, with sculptures by Thorwaldsen.

The pedestrian, with a guide, may reach Cadenabbia or La Majolica without descending by the carriage-road to Menaggio. The path is rough, but the scenery beautiful.

## ROUTE 116.

[CHIAVENNA TO COLICO AND COMO.—  
LAKE OF COMO.

The high-road connecting the pass of the Splügen with Milan runs through the valley of the *Maira* or *Mera*, and along the E. shore of the L. of Como to Lecco. The villages it passes through are described under the head of the Lake of Como. There are diligences from Chiavenna to meet the steamer at Colico. The journey takes nearly 3 hrs.; distance 16 m. Below Chiavenna (Rte. 87) the valley of the *Maira* is flat and marshy till it reaches

*Riva*, near the N. extremity of the *Lago Mezzola*, called also *Lago di Riva*. It is the true head of *Lago di Como*, separated from it in the course of centuries by the deposits of the *Adda*. Its W. and E. shores are so walled in by mountains that, down to a recent time, there was no road by the side of it, and travellers were carried across it in barges by a tedious navigation. The naked granitic ranges have a very peculiar outline. Their sides are furrowed with ravines, down which, at some seasons, torrents precipi-

tate themselves, strewing the margin of the lake with wreck. The engineers who constructed the new road, finished 1835, experienced the greatest obstacles in crossing the debris at the mouth of these ravines. The *Codera*, one of the most furious torrents, spreads its waste of rocks and gravel in the shape of a fan, for a breadth of at least half a mile. This river at ordinary times trickles through the stones in 3 or 4 paltry dribbles, crossed by wooden bridges, under which the water is turned by artificial canals, flanked by wedge-shaped dykes. [*Val Codera* is a steep, wild glen. At the hamlet of *Codera* is a rough *Inn*. Fine foot-passes lead over to the Baths of Masino (Rte. 101).] After traversing this desolate space the road is carried through two galleries excavated in the rock, and soon after emerges upon the delta of the river *Adda*, flowing from the E. out of the *Valtellina*. The causeway stretches in a straight line across this morass, passing the *Adda* upon a substantial stone bridge. Near the centre of the plain the great road to the *Stelvio* branches l. (see Rte. 101). The Spanish Fort *Fuentes*, built 1603, is the key of the *Valtellina*, on a rock, once, perhaps, an island, near the mouth of the *Adda*, is left on the rt., and the margin of the lake of Como is reached at

*Colico*, a village under Monte Legnone, S. of the embouchure of the *Adda*. It is less unwholesome than formerly, owing to the drainage of a large portion of the marsh-land. It is not, however, a good halting-place; the *Inns*, on the *Piazza Garibaldi*, *All' Isola Bella*, and *Angelo*, are poor and not clean.

## LAKE OF COMO.

The Lake of Como, 700 ft. above the sea, is about 31 miles long, by either arm (37 with the *Lago di Mezzola*), from 1 to 2½ m. broad, and everywhere deep, in places 1300 ft. Its S. extremity is divided into two branches by the promontory of *Bellaggio*; at the end of the S.W. bay lies *Como*

(Comum), the birthplace of the younger Pliny and Volta; at the extremity of the E., *Lecco*. The chief feeder of the lake is the *Adda*, which enters it at the N., and flows out at *Lecco*. In the mingled sublimity and beauty of its scenery, and in the richness of its vegetation, it is rivalled by other Italian lakes. None of them, however, has its shores so lined with villas, palaces and gardens, and on this account many tastes prefer the narrow and winding reaches of the *Como* to the broader expanses of *Garda* and *Maggiore*. The lake enjoys a classical reputation, as the residence of the two *Plinys*, and the scene of the scientific researches of the elder *Pliny*, the naturalist. *Claudian* describes the voyage up the lake in the following elegant lines:—

“*Protinus umbrosâ quâ vestit littus olivâ  
Larius, et dulci mentitur Nereæ fluctu,  
Parvâ puppe lacum prætervolat, oculus inde  
Scandit inaccessos brumali sidere montes.*”

A true poetic picture is presented by the author of ‘*Philip van Artevelde*’—

“Sublime, but neither bleak nor bare,  
Nor misty are the mountains there,  
Softly sublime—profusely fair,  
Up to their summits clothed in green,  
And fruitful as the vales between,  
They lightly rise,  
And scale the skies,  
And groves and gardens still abound;  
For where no shoot  
Could else take root  
The peaks are shelved, and terraced round.  
Earthward appear in mingled growth  
The mulberry and maize, above  
The trellis’d vine extends to both  
The leafy shade they love.  
Looks out the white-wall’d cottage here,  
The lowly chapel rises near;  
Far down the foot must roam to reach  
The lovely lake and bending beach;  
While chestnut green and olive gray  
Chequer the steep and winding way.”

In fine weather during summer the winds are invariably: from sunrise to 10 or 11 the *tirano*, a gentle breeze, N., or down the lake: calm for an hour or two till past 12, when the *brevi*, a gentle breeze, S., or up the lake, rises, and continues till sunset, after which a dead calm till sunrise. Boats avail themselves of these winds, and wait for them as a river-barge waits for tide. As a general rule,

the surface is but slightly furrowed; sudden storms are, however, not rare, and the violent squalls that sometimes sweep down the lake are dangerous. The old-fashioned boats are most picturesque, and exactly resemble those depicted by old painters. They are not so slow as their appearance would lead one to expect. There are, however, modern boats fitted in the English style, and not uncomfortable. The principal fish are the trout, pike, and *agone*, the last peculiar to the lakes of Lombardy.

Steamers go several times a day up and down the lake, touching by a very devious course at the different villages. For short trips, however, a rowing-boat is much preferable to a steamer. The boats are attached to the hotels, and have somewhat high tariff prices. The steamers start from *Colico*, and reach *Como* or *Lecco* in 4½ hrs. They are large, comfortable boats (good restaurants on board). There is also a diligence-road on the E. side of the lake to *Lecco*, a very fine piece of engineering. The principal places on the l. hand or East are marked E., those on the other side W.

Starting from *Colico*, we come to *Domaso*, W., beautifully situated under the *Corno di Duria*, 7156 ft., and nearly opposite to *Colico* and the *Monte Lequone*, 9568 ft. About 1 m. from it is

*Gravedona*, W. (H. del Sasso, fair), a large and populous village, “ought not to be left unvisited by anyone who cares about architecture” (G. E. Street) on account of its 2 very interesting churches—*S. Giovanni Battista* (12th cent.), with square W. porch surmounted by a graceful octagon tower, and Romanesque triforium running round the interior—and *S. Vincenzo*, with curious crypt, one of the pillars bearing a fresco of Christ, and in the sacristy old church-plate, a chalice, paten, and processional cross. The huge villa with four towers was built by a Cardinal Gallio. By the valley of the *Liro* which here flows into the lake, are 2 passes to the *Val Mesocco*,—the *Passo di Camedo* to *Roveredo*,

the *Passo di S. Jorio*, 6417 ft., in about 9 hrs. to Bellinzona. Beyond Gravedona there is no carriage-road, but only an ancient track called *Strada Regina*, which, according to tradition, was made centuries ago by Theodolinda, Queen of the Lombards. Where it passes the precipices of the *Susso Rancio*, between Rezzonico and Menaggio, it was at one time so dangerous that several of the Russian soldiers, when traversing it, 1799, fell from it into the lake.

*Dongo*, W., there are iron-works.

*Musso*, W., on the mountain side, the *Castle of Musso*, in the 15th cent. the stronghold of the adventurer Giovanni Medici.

*Dervio*, E., at the foot of Monte Legnone.

[The *Leymone* (8568 ft.), the highest mountain rising from the shores of the lake, may be ascended from Colico, but more easily from the *Val Varrone*, on the S.; from Pagnona or Premana, where travellers will find rough accommodation. It is a long and fatiguing day's work, but the view from the summit, when clear, is of the highest order.]

*Rezzonico*, W., has the remains of a 13th-cent. castle, now belonging to the Duke Litta. The boatmen here have the reputation of being the best on the lake.

† *Bellano*, E., at the mouth of the *Pioverna*, the stream from the *Val Sassina*, a beautiful valley, through which the pedestrian who has already seen the lake may reach Lecco in 6 or 7 hrs., passing *Introbio*, the principal village, where there is a tolerable Inn.

*Gittana*, E., on the slope of the mountain. Above this, and about 500 ft. above the lake, by a good road, is the *Hydropathic Establishment of Repeleto*, much frequented both by Milanese and foreigners. It is said to be well conducted.

† *Varenna* (Inn: Albergo Reale, good and clean), the best stopping-place on the E. side of the lake, but, owing to its exposure, hot in summer, near the mouth of the beautiful glen of *Esino*. Visit the remarkable galleries exca-

vated in the solid rock, on the *Road of the Stelvio*. Pleasant walks up the mountain to the Castle, to the hamlet of Perledo, and along the brow of the hill to the cascade of the *Fiume Latte*. It is a very beautiful walk of 4 hrs. to *Introbio* in the *Val Sassina* by the little valley of *Esino* and the *Cainallo Pass*. By the same valley the mountaineer can make the ascent of the

*Grigna* or *Monte Codino* (7908 ft.), the summit of the rugged range which in tier over tier of limestone precipices overhangs the S.E. branch of the lake, commonly called the *Lago di Lecco*. The best plan is to go first to the village of *Esino*, and there inquire for a shepherd boy who knows the mountain and will serve as guide. The path lies to the rt. from near the head of the valley, and presents the utmost variety of beautiful and wild scenery. An easier but less interesting way is by the steep eastern side from near *Introbio*, and it would be the better plan to combine both, ascending from *Introbio*, and descending to *Varenna*. The *Grigna* commands a panorama of the greatest splendour, embracing the vast plain of Lombardy and the whole circle of the Alps, from the *Col di Tenda* to the *Bernina*. The S. peak of the mountain is called the *Cumpione* (7158 ft.), and is girdled by impassable cliffs, except towards the E., on which side a rock close to the summit may be reached from the head of the *Val Sassina*, but the highest point has hitherto proved inaccessible.

† *Menaggio*, W., has been already noticed. (Rte. 115).

The steamer now crosses to the promontory of *Bellaggio*, which juts out into the lake, dividing its two southern branches. The formerly charming aspect of the village from the water has been destroyed by the erection of two monster hotels.

† *Bellaggio* (Inns: H. Grande Bretagne, an immense hotel, with *Villa Serbelloni* on the hill, as dépendance, *Eng. Ch. S.*; H. de *Bellaggio*, another equally immense hotel N. of the village; H. *Genazzini*, good; H. and

Pension de Florence). This is a delightful spot, commanding the most noble and varied views over the lake. The prospect is triple, extending upwards, as well as down towards Como and Lecco. The best points for enjoying it are the very beautiful terraces and gardens of the *Villa Serbelloni*, now an hotel (fee  $\frac{1}{2}$  fr.). They occupy the whole brow of the promontory. There are few near walks at Bellaggio, nothing but narrow stony lanes between dead walls, obstructing all view, but excursions into a more open country can be made. The most interesting to a good walker is the ascent of the *Monte S. Primo*, the highest point of the peninsula, 5236 ft. above the sea, an ascent of 4 hrs. on foot or donkey.

There is a carriage-road from Bellaggio through Canzo to Como or Lecco—a very beautiful drive too seldom taken.

The *Villa Melzi*, about half a mile below Bellaggio, is elegantly fitted. It has fine works of art—statues, busts, a portrait of Napoleon, but is chiefly visited on account of its beautiful flower-garden, abounding in tropical plants, rare pines, &c.

The *Villa Giulia*, on the Lecco side of the promontory, formerly belonged to the King of the Belgians. It has beautiful gardens.

There are other villas in the neighbourhood to which the boatmen will take visitors. They all have their state-rooms, but are principally remarkable for the luxuriance with which English green-house plants flourish in the open air.

There cannot be a more delightful voyage than that along the S.W. arm of the lake to Como; the shores are lined with villages and with white villas, the summer resort of the Milanese gentry during the season of the *Villeggiatura*.

The steamer here recrosses to

†*Cadenabbia*, W. (*Inns*: Bellevue, an immense building, close to the water, very comfortable. It has a chapel for English services; *Ville de Milan*; *Belle Isle*). This is, perhaps, the most delightful place on the lake.

There are beautiful walks above

*Cadenabbia*. Striking up the first little passage N. of the Bellevue, a pretty path through fields and vineyards leads, in 25 min., to the ch. and village of *San Martino*. A white chapel will be seen high up on the shoulder of the mountain beyond. A rough and steep path commanding beautiful views over the lake leads, in about an hour more, to the little chapel *Madonna di San Martino*.

A longer excursion is the ascent of the *Monte Crocione*, 5499 ft. above the sea. There is a circuitous path by which mules may reach the summit. The view, though of course very beautiful, is not equal to those from the *Monte Generoso*, the *Legnone*, or the *Corno di Canzo W.* of *Lecco*.

Close to *Cadenabbia* is the *Villa Carlotta*, formerly *Somintriva* (belonging to the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen), among terraces bordered with myrtle hedges 20 ft. high. This contains the *Amore e Psyche*, and other works of *Canova*, and, above all, *Thorvaldsen's* grand bas-relief of the *Triumph of Alexander*, executed for Napoleon when Emperor, and designed by him to decorate the *Simplon arch* at *Milan*.

The villa is called *Villa Carlotta*, after a daughter of Prince Albert of Prussia. The house and grounds are shown (fee 1 fr.).

The village called at on the W. shore, immediately after leaving *Cadenabbia*, with which it is connected by a narrow road, is

†*Tremezzo*, W. with a second-rate *Inn*: *Alb. Bazzoni*. Beyond this a rocky promontory stands out into the lake; its rounded summit is laid out as a pleasure-ground, and near the point is the fine *Villa Balbissello*, belonging to the *Marchese Arconati*. The rocks here descend into very deep water, *Rt.* is the small island *Isola Comacina*, and a few miles farther on the same side

†*Argegno*, W., at the opening of the *Val Intero*. Car-road to *Osteno*, on *Lago di Lugano* (11 miles). Hence the *Monte Generoso* (*Rte.* 114) may conveniently be ascended. Nearly opposite, at the foot of the *Monte S. Primo*, is

*Nesso*, E., one of the most picturesque village son the lake. In a narrow ravine, called the *Orrido di Nesso*, a waterfall. In the W. shore a remarkable cavern pierces the mountain above *Torriglia*. It is of considerable extent, and when discovered contained the remains of various animals, particularly of the cave-bear, after which it is called the *Buca dell' Orso*. About 7 m. S. of *Nesso*, in a nook on the lake, is

*La Pliniana*, E., now the property of *Marchesa Trotti* (or *Princess Belgiojoso*), a square building, so called, not because *Pliny* lived there, but because an intermittent spring, rising behind it, is asserted to be the one minutely described by him.

The *Villa Lenno* is supposed to stand on the site of *Pliny's Villa*, which, from its sombre situation, he called *Tragedia*; an opinion confirmed by the discovery of broken columns, &c., in the lake.

Nearly opposite is the hamlet of

*Moltrasio*, W., which also boasts its waterfall; near to it the large *Villa Passalacqua*; and on the opposite or E. shore, on a projecting point, the picturesque village of *Torno*. Thence to *Como*, wherever the slope of the mountain is not too steep, villas constantly succeed each other. Those of *Prince Trubetzkoi*, of the late *Madame Pasta*, the singer, and of *Count Taverna*, are amongst the most noticeable. These villas, like all the places on the E. shore of this branch of the lake, are accessible only by water, or by an exceedingly rough path, fit only for mountaineers.

On the W. shore, about 2½ m. from *Como*, is

† *Cernobbio*, W. Inn: *La Regina d'Inghilterra*, a large and comfortable hotel, admirable in situation, close to the lake. It is very good and pleasant winter quarters, and is connected by a bridge with the *Villa d'Este*, for some time the residence of *Queen Caroline*, now also an hotel. The *Monte Bisbino*, which rises N. of the hotel, and may be ascended in 2½ hrs., commands an admirable view. There is a good carriage-road to *Como*, and omnibus

½ hr. drive. On the way is passed the *Villa Raimondi*, one of the largest on the lake.

† *Como* (Inns: *Volta*, good; *Italia*). See, near the harbour, the statue of *Volta*, "a prophet justly honoured in his own country:" *Cathedral*, Rom. (1396–1521); its *Baptistery* a design of *Bramante's*; 3 paintings by *Luini*. *Broletto* (town hall), 13th cent., on arches. These buildings are of marble, in stripes. For a description of this very interesting town see *Handbook for Northern Italy*.

The antiquary should not omit to visit *S. Carpofo* (9th cent.), *S. Fedele* (6th cent.), and *S. Abbondio* (10th cent.), about a mile out of the town. The villages by the lake and the scattered hamlets on the mountains are believed to contain many remains of early middle-age architecture which would well repay careful investigation.

#### LAGO DI LECCO.

There are two Steamers daily from *Colico*, and two from *Como*, to *Lecco*. All stop at *Bellaggio*. The voyage down the *Lecco* branch takes 1½ hr.

The scenery of this arm of the lake is larger and bolder, but less picturesque, than that of the *Como* arm. There are few villages and no villas; but the precipices of the *Grigna* rise most imposingly above the E. shore. Beneath them, among vineyards and chestnut-groves lies *Mundello*, the only large village on this part of the lake.

*Lecco* (*Croce di Malta*, dear; *Italia*, fair; *Leone d'Oro*) is a prosperous manufacturing town, unremarkable except for its position at the point where the lake first narrows into a river, and under the imposing rocks of the *Resegone* (Saw). Rlys. to *Milan* and *Bergamo*. (Hdbk. for N. Italy.)

[A pleasant uphill drive of 2½ hrs. leads to *Introbio*, in *Val Sassina* (Inn, poor), a good starting-point for the ascent of the *Grigna*, or for the *Bergamasque valleys* (Rte, 110).]

## ROUTE 117.

## ARONA TO VARALLO, IN THE VAL SESIA.

| Arona.                | Eng. m. |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Borgománëro . . . . . | 6       |
| Romagnano . . . . .   | 7½      |
| Borgo Sesia . . . . . | 7½      |
| Varallo . . . . .     | 6       |

Altogether 5 hours' drive from Arona to Varallo.

Most travellers prefer the longer route by Orta and the Col di Colma.

*Borgománëro* is a large well-built town in the direct road to Vercelli and Turin, from Arona, and on the rly. from Novara to Gozzano. [A good carriage-road runs through Gozzano to *Buccione*, a village at the head of the lake of Orta, which may be reached in an hour from *Borgománëro*. A road has also been made from Arona to Orta, avoiding the détour by *Borgománëro*. The scenery on the road, especially the approach to the lake of Orta (Rte. 118), is very fine. At *Buccione* boats may be had to Omegna at the lower end of the lake, distant 9 m.; or to Orta.]

From *Borgománëro* there is an excellent road to the little town of *Romagnano* on the Sesia (*Inn*, La Posta), remarkable as the spot where Bayard—*sans peur et sans reproche*—received his death-wound while protecting the rear of the French under Bonnivét in their retreat across the Alps, April 20, 1524. From *Romagnano* the road up the course of the Sesia is singularly beautiful; the mountains as they are approached offer richly wooded slopes, and the masses are relieved by castles, churches, and oratories. The vegetation is most luxuriant; several villages are passed.

The principal place before arriving at Varallo is *Borgo Sesia* (*Inns*: Corona; Gran Bretagna), just above the junction of the Strona, on which stream lies *Valduggia*, birthplace of *Gaudenzio Ferrari*, the painter, 1484. The *Monte Fenera*, an ascent of 3 hrs. in the same direction, is a splendid point of view for the lakes and alps, and has 3 curious caverns hung with stalactites,

[From *Borgo Sesia* a very beautiful country road leads to Biella (20 m.) (Rte. 124), passing through *Creva-cuore* and *Mosso Sta. Maria*. The beauty of the region where the Alps and plain meet is very insufficiently known to English travellers. Those who do not care for the high passes will find the road from the lakes through Biella to Ivrea and Val d'Aosta full of beauty and interest, and far preferable to the circuitous railways.]

At *Borgo Sesia* the valley becomes narrower, and the road offers some striking scenes, though the range of view is more limited. It opens again in the neighbourhood of

*Varallo* (*Inns*: La Posta, fine view, good; Albergo d'Italia, fallen off; Restaurant H. Sacro Monte, at the gate of the Sanctuary). There are other inns, and many are needed to provide for the bodily wants of the pilgrim visitors to the Sacro Monte, who, especially on the Festas of the Church, crowd here as devotees. At the Casino di Lettura the *Italian Alpine Club* has quarters, where foreigners can see maps and books. The situation of this town is so beautiful, and the sanctuary on its celebrated Sacro Monte—*La Nuova Gerusalemme nel Sacro Monte di Varallo*—so singularly picturesque, that no one who has the opportunity should neglect to visit Varallo.

The *Sacro Monte* rises immediately above the town, and is accessible by a paved path, which winds up the side of the hill, and offers from every turn the most beautiful scenes.

In the fine *Ch. of S. Francesco*, at the foot of the S. Monte, are some admirable works by *Gaudenzio Ferrari*, a native of *Valduggia*, on the Strona, a pupil and companion of Raphael, executed after his return from Rome, 1510-13. The whole wall dividing the nave from the choir (the passage from one to the other being only through a small arch) is painted by him in fresco, in 19 compartments, representing events in our Saviour's history—the central and largest being the Crucifixion. They are all most carefully executed,

and are among the best works of the master, serving to illustrate his position in Italian art. In a side chapel (rt.) are also 2 frescoes by him—the Circumcision and the Dispute with the Doctors; not so good. In the cloister is a Pietà; and in the Sacristy a Virgin and saints, on wood, by Giovenone, his master, much injured.

In the *Ch. of S. Gaudenzio* is a fine altarpiece on panel, on the external wall of the *Ch. of S. Pietro*, a painting of Sta. Petronilla, both by G. Ferrari.

The hill of the Sacro Monte is covered with a series of 50 chapels or oratories, containing groups of figures modelled in terra-cotta, painted and clothed. They chiefly represent some of the principal events in the history of Christ, in the order of their occurrence. These structures are never entered; they are merely frames or cases for the subjects grouped within them, seen from 2 or 3 peep-holes in front. As works of art the greater number are very indifferent. A few, on the contrary, by Gaudenzio and his pupils, contain works of the highest merit, and to these the attention of every traveller of taste is specially invited. He will be sorry to miss them, as he might easily do, in passing rapidly along the mass of rubbish. Externally, these oratories are rich in the architectural display of façades, porticos, domes, &c.: the figures within are the size of life.

The subjects are in the order of the numbers of the chapels.

1. The Fall of Man. Adam and Eve are seen amidst animals of all sorts and sizes, from the elephant to the rabbit.
2. The Annunciation. The first of the series referring to Christ.
3. The Visitation.
4. The Angel announcing to Joseph the Miraculous Conception.
5. The Magi and Star of the East, by Gaudenzio and his pupils.
6. The Nativity.
7. Joseph and Mary adoring Christ.
8. The Presentation in the Temple.

9. The Angel advising Joseph to fly into Egypt.

10. The Flight.

- 11.\*The Murder of the Innocents. Above 60 figures, the size of life, besides the painted groups on the walls; so arranged as to assist the composition.

12. The Baptism in the Jordan.

13. The Temptation.

14. Christ and the Woman of Samaria.

15. Christ Curing the Paralytic.

16. Christ Raising the Widow's Son.

17. The Transfiguration. This oratory, by Pietro Petera, a native of Val Sesia, the largest of all, perhaps 100 ft. high, is represented upon an enormous scale; the group in the foreground contains the demoniac boy; on the mountain, an immense modelled mass, are the three disciples; above them Christ, with Moses and Elias; over these, painted on the walls and ceiling of the dome, are the host of heaven; and above all, the Almighty.

18. The Raising of Lazarus.

19. The Entrance into Jerusalem.

20. The Last Supper.

21. Christ in the Garden.

22. Christ finds his Disciples Sleeping.

23. Christ betrayed by Judas.

24. Christ in the House of Annas.

25. Christ in the Hands of Caiaphas.

26. The Repentance of St. Peter.

27. Christ in the House of Pilate.

28. Christ in the House of Herod.

29. Christ Recondacted to Pilate.

30. The Flagellation.

31. Christ Crowned with Thorns.

32. Christ again conducted to Pilate.

33. Christ shown to the People.

34. Pilate Washing his Hands.

35. Christ sentenced to Death.

36. Christ Bearing the Cross.

37. Christ Nailed to the Cross.

- 38.\*\*The Crucifixion.

The paintings on the walls and ceiling of this chapel are the masterpiece of Gaudenzio Ferrari. The chief subject, a splendid composition, including 60 or 70 figures, is in good

preservation. Observe the soft beauty of the group of females and children.

39. Christ taken down from the Cross.
40. The Pietà—the Women around the Body of Christ. This was the earliest work of Gaudenzio. The frescoes, now much injured, were painted when he was but nineteen. The original modelled figures have been removed, and others substituted.
41. The Body wrapped in Linen.
42. San Francesco.
43. Christ Lying in the Sepulchre.
44. Saint Anna.
45. An Angel announcing to the Virgin Mary her Translation to Heaven.
46. The Sepulchre of the Virgin Mary.

All the walls are painted, and many of the pictures are masterly productions, not unworthy of the reputation of *Pelegriño Tibaldi*, whose name is found in the list of those who were employed upon the works of the *Sacro Monte di Varallo*; together with that of *Gaudenzio Ferrari*, *Fiammingo* the famous sculptor of children, and many other artists of eminence, as painters, sculptors, and architects. The valleys of the *Novarese*, of which *Val Sesia* is the principal, are remarkable for the number of painters they have produced, and the names of many are preserved here as having contributed to the embellishment of this singular sanctuary.

Much effect is produced by the appropriate situation of some of the subjects. The access to the place where Christ is laid in the sepulchre is by a vault, where little light is admitted; and as it is difficult on entering from the open day to distinguish at first any object, the effect is very imposing.

Many of the figures clothed in real drapery, and some have real hair, which appears grotesque, yet they are full of character and expression; many of the heads are finely modelled. In the subject of the Visitation the head of a female is strikingly fine. The

executioners conducting to Calvary, or otherwise employed in inflicting suffering on Christ, are, to increase the disgust for their characters, modelled with goitres appended to their throats.

The *Sacro Monte* originated in the piety of the Beato (i.e. half saint) Bernardino Caimo, or Coloto, a noble Milanese, who obtained in 1486, from Pope Innocent VIII., a faculty to found this sanctuary. Only 3 or 4 chapels were built in the time of the founder, but after two visits paid to it by S. Carlo Borromeo in 1578 and 1584, the prestige of the spot for sanctity soon so increased, that princes and rich devotees contributed to make it what it now is. The pallet *bedstead*, upon which the patron saint of Milan died, is preserved here as a holy relic for the veneration of the faithful.

The convent, where the priests reside, in a beautiful situation, commands views of *Varallo* and the *Val Sesia* below the town. At the entrance to the Oratories, booths or shops are established for the sale of *corone*, i.e. beads, crucifixes, *Madonnas*, &c., which have acquired sanctity by having touched the blessed bed of the holy S. Carlo, or other miracle-working relics.

Near *Varallo* are nickel-mines worked by an English company.

The population of the *Val Sesia* is about 35,000; most of the men leave the valley and find employment elsewhere as masons, builders, &c.

There is good trout-fishing in the river.

The *Ponte della Gula*, about 1 hr.'s walk up the *Val Mastalone*, is a remarkable scene; the green river hemmed in by vertical rocks 150 ft. high, is spanned by a lofty bridge. A good carriage-road goes to the village of *Fobello*. (See Rte. 122.) *Omibus* twice a day from *Varallo* to *Novara Stat.*

## ROUTE 118.

BAVENO TO VARALLO, (A) BY MONTE MOTTERONE, ORTA, AND THE COL DI COLMA, (B) BY VAL STRONA.

| Baveno to         | Miles. |
|-------------------|--------|
| Omegna . . . . .  | 9      |
| Orta . . . . .    | 7      |
| Varallo . . . . . | 5 hrs. |

Orta and its beautiful lake may be reached from Baveno (Rte. 111), either by passing over the Motterone, a walk or ride of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  hrs., or by the carriage-road through Omegna.

*Monte Motterone.* The mule-path from Baveno, passing through woods of chestnut during the lower part of the ascent; is carried over a neck of the mountain a long way below the summit, which is reached by a grassy slope. At the base of this are several dairy-farms or châteaux, on the Alpe delle Volpe, where the traveller can obtain refreshment in the shape of excellent cream, milk, cheese, &c. It takes 3 hrs. to descend on foot to Orta: in fact, the walk from Baveno requires nearly 7 hrs.

The view from the Monte Motterone (4893 ft.) is one of the most extensive on the S. declivity of the Alps. In front are the hills of the Val Sesia, leading the eye up to the peaks of Monte Rosa. The line of snowy peaks to rt. of the latter, embracing Cima di Jazzi, Fletschhorn, Monte Leone, and Bortelhorn, appears to great advantage. Farther E. rise the peaks and glaciers near the Bernardino and Splügen passes, and in the further distance the Bernina Alps. Almost at his feet the traveller sees 5 lakes—the Maggiore, the Lake of Orta, those of Monate, Comabbio, and Varese; and still farther to the rt. the great plain of Lombardy and Piedmont, studded with innumerable villages, with Milan in the centre. The two great tributaries of the Po, the Sesia and the Ticino, appear like silver ribbons traversing the dark ground of the plain; the distant Apennines of Parma and Modena close this exquisite panorama to the S., whilst the

plain of Lombardy stretches afar to the E. until lost in the horizon.

If the weather be unfavourable for the view, the traveller may reach Orta without passing over the summit, and spare more than an hour's walk. On the descent he passes the churches of Madonna di Luciago, Chieggino, and Miasino.

[Char from Baveno to Orta, 12 fr. The carriage-road follows the side of the Lago Maggiore to *Gravellona* (Rte. 111). It then turns to the l., and ascends continually through a valley of no remarkable beauty to

*Omegna* (Inn: Posta, very poor). This is a village at the N. end of the Lake of Orta, beautifully situated, but containing nothing worth notice. Boat to Orta, one man 3 fr., 2 men 5 fr. The lake is a more pleasant way of reaching Orta than the road by the side, but takes somewhat longer. The road is, however, good, and very pretty, passing through chestnut-woods and fields covered with vines and green crops.]

*Orta* (1220 ft.) (Inns: Albergo San Giulio, good; Leone d'Oro). This town is delightfully placed on the borders of the lake. The facilities for fishing, boating, and bathing in the lake, offer inducements for a short stay in this cool and delicious retirement. The charming villa of Count Natta has beautiful gardens above the town.

Along the edge of the lake are many comfortable houses, either belonging to or hired by Milanese and Turinese families for the summer.

The *Monte Sacro*, or *Sanctuario*, is dedicated to Saint Francis of Assisi, and is approached by 22 chapels or oratories, like those of Varallo. Some are elegant in their architecture; and they contain, as at Varallo, groups in terra-cotta, representing scenes in the life of St. Francis, of which at least seven are fair works of art. The iron-work in many of the chapels is exquisite and well worthy attention. The hill is covered with noble firs and other trees, and the magnolia and cactus are seen growing in the open air. The views from the Monte

Sacro are of singular beauty, comprising the lake, the proximate mountains covered with wood, villages which speckle the shores and sides of the hills, and the whole surmounted by the Alps.

The custode of the Monte is to be found at the first chapel within the gate. From Aug. 2 to Aug. 9 is a grand fête in the Sacro Monte. Vast numbers of people assemble, and there are booths, swings, &c., as at a fair.

The *Isola di San Giulio*, between Orta and Pella, is an object of singular beauty. The church and village surmount a rock which rises out of the deep lake; and the bright buildings contrast with the blue waters with a fairy-like effect. The church, partly modernized (a curious pulpit), was built on a spot rendered sacred by the retreat of San Giulio, in the 4th century; here his ashes are preserved in a vault; and the vertebrae of a monstrous serpent (in reality bones of a whale), said to have been destroyed by the saint, are shown as a relic.

The church contains frescoes by *P. Tivaldi*; a side chapel rudely painted by an unknown master, 1486; another entirely by *Gaudenzio Ferrari*, the chief subject the Virgin and Child enthroned, singularly graceful, but injured; above, the Martyrdom of St. Stephen; on the vaulted roof the 4 Doctors of the Western Church, with the Evangelistic symbols—interesting examples of the pure Lombard style; a curious pulpit, and bas-reliefs of S. Giulio driving out snakes from the island. Gisla, the wife of Berengar II., king of Lombardy, took refuge on the island in 962, and defended it resolutely against Otho I., emperor of Germany, who had invaded Italy and deposed her husband. Otho restored the island to the bishops of Novara, who had long held it before it was seized by Berengar.

It was the plan of General Chasseloup to continue the great route of the Simplon along the shores of the lake of Orta; but the difference of

level—Orta being 550 feet higher than the Lago Maggiore—induced the adoption of the line by Baveno.

[A road leads in 5 miles to *Gozzano* Station, where there is a railway to Milan. The drive may be continued to Arona (3 hrs. from Orta), over hilly country. Omnibus daily.]

#### COL DI COLMA.

*Orta to Varallo* 5 hrs. The lake is crossed by boat to

*Pella* (H. del Club Alpino), the village opposite Orta, where donkeys may be hired for crossing the *Colma* to Varallo, 4½ hrs. This romantic pass is described in Mr. R. Brown-ing's poem 'By the Fireside.' A steep path leads up the mountain side to Arola amidst the richest vegetation; vines, figs, gourds, and fruit-trees, and with delightful views of the lake of Orta. Forest-trees offer their shade, and the road in some places passes amidst precipices of granite in a state of decomposition; here many of the specimens sold at Baveno are obtained. Above these rocks the path continues through scenes resembling the most beautiful park scenery of England, and then opens upon the *Col di Colma*, a bushy common, where, from an eminence on the l., wide views are presented of the lakes of Orta, Maggiore, and the plains of Lombardy, and, towards the Alps, by mounting a slight eminence on the l., of Monte Rosa.

The descent on the other side is not less beautiful. The Val Sesia is seen in the deep distance, richly wooded and studded with churches and villages; the path leads down by sunny blades and slopes, which sometimes recall the most agreeable recollections of home to an English traveller; then changes almost suddenly to the gloom of a ravine, where there are quarries, formerly worked for the buildings of Varallo, buried in a forest of enormous walnut and chestnut trees. Issuing from this wild dell, the traveller shortly finds himself in the Val Sesia at Rocco, about 1 mile from

*Varallo*. See Rte. 117.

A shorter road turns rt. about 150 yards beyond the Col—leaving Rocco on the l., and joins the old road about  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. from Varallo.

### B. VAL STRONA.

The bridle-path from Omegna to Varallo by the *Val Strona* involves a considerable circuit, but the scenery will amply compensate the traveller for his extra labour. The distance, 14 hrs., might be accomplished in one day by an active pedestrian, but it is a better plan to sleep at Fobello, where there is a good country inn.

The *Val Strona* is a narrow glen whose steep sides are clothed with fine forest-trees and a beautiful and varied vegetation. From Omegna a rough paved path, in some parts rather steep, ascends the valley, through chestnut-woods, and at every turn presents new pictures of exquisite beauty. It passes Chesio rt. and Strona l. to *Forno* (clean Inn, Leone d'Oro),  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr., and ascends over rough ground to Piano, and then easily up beech-covered slopes to

*Campello*,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr., a very picturesque village, but not offering good quarters. Here the path turns l., leaving the source of the Strona and a track to the Val Anzasca rt., and ascends first over rocks and then by slopes of grass to the

*Col di Campello*,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. It is a pass of no great height (about 6400 ft.?) on the ridge which separates the Val Strona from the Val Mastalone. The Monte Rosa, of which 5 peaks, rising like turrets from the prodigious wall which forms its eastern face, are from 12 to 14 m. distant, presents one of the grandest views to be seen in the Alps. A tolerably correct drawing is given in Mr. King's 'Italian Valleys.' A steep descent of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hr. leads to the village of *Rimella* in the Val Mastalone, 1 hr. from Ferrera. Accommodation may be had at *Rimella* (Inn: Della Fontana, exorbitant charges), but it is better to push on to

*Fobello*, where there are good inns.

The carr.-road from thence to Varallo is given in Rte. 122. [From *Rimella* there is a mule-path by the *Col d'Orchetta* to Ponte Grande in about 6 hrs. At the last hamlet of the valley it crosses the torrent, and turning l., ascends by a lateral stream to a group of high chalets, where milk can be obtained. Thence up steep and bare ground to the col, which is a grassy hollow marked by a cross,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  hrs. from *Rimella*. Ponte Grande is seen far down in the Val Anzasca, but the Pizzo del Moro and Cima d'Egua conceal the Monte Rosa Alps. The descent is long and steep, over rolling stones to the Alpi d'Orchetta, then by meadows to the Barranca path, 1 hr. above Ponte Grande, which is reached in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from the col.]

Another way from Omegna to Varallo, rather longer and more laborious than the ordinary route by the Col di Colma, but much shorter than that by the Val Strona, is by the village of *Quarna*, and from thence over the *Monte Mazzuccone* to *Camusco*. This mountain is a somewhat enlarged edition of the *Motterone*, which lies a few miles farther E. It is situated nearer Monte Rosa, but is not so centrally placed in regard to the lakes. By this route Omegna is about 8 hrs.' walk from Varallo.

### ROUTE 119.

#### VARALLO TO ALAGNA. THE VAL SESIA.

| Varallo.        | Hrs. | Min. | Eng. m.          |
|-----------------|------|------|------------------|
| Balmuccia . . . | 2    | 10   | = 7              |
| Scopa . . .     | 0    | 45   | = $2\frac{1}{4}$ |
| Mollia . . .    | 2    | 20   | = $7\frac{1}{4}$ |
| Riva . . .      | 1    | 35   | = 5              |
| Alagna . . .    | 0    | 45   | = $1\frac{1}{4}$ |

Walk of  $7\frac{1}{4}$  hrs. There is a good carriage-road as far as Mollia. Mules may be had at that village. *Diligence* twice daily from Mollia to the rly.

The Val Sesia offers scenery of less rugged grandeur than some of its lateral valleys; but in its course many landscapes of great beauty are passed,

chiefly rendered so by the fine forms and rich wooding of the mountain slopes, and the sometimes tranquil, often furious course of the Sesia. At *Bulmuccia* the wild *Val Scermenta*, called also *Val Piccola*, opens on the rt. (Rte. 122). The next village is *Scopa* with a clean *Inn*, kept by Giuseppe Foppino.

At *Scopello* (*Inn*: Nazionale, indiffer-ent, charges extortionate) there are many smelting-houses, where the copper ore, already washed and crushed, is reduced. About 50 tons are raised annually at Alagna. Chars can be obtained from Scopello to Varallo, 7½ fr.; 2 hrs.

There is not much variation in the scenery, though the whole is pleasing. The road passes *Piode*, *Campertogno*, and

*Mollia* (a clean little *Inn*, Alb. Val-sesiana), where it ends.

*Riva* (*Inns*: H. des Alpes, fair; Le Pietre Gemelle), the chief of the high villages in the valley; picturesque from a distance, but poor and comfortless. It is situated at the confluence of the torrents of the Dobbia and the Sesia at the foot of the Col di Val Dobbia (Rte. 123).

The *Church of Riva* will surprise the traveller by its excessive decoration, and the real talent with which it is painted within and without, chiefly by one of the numerous artists whom the Val Sesia has produced—Tanzio, or Antonio d'Enrico, a native of Alagna. The external paintings have a remarkable freshness, though they have existed more than 200 years, exposed to the weather in this high valley.

The view of Monte Rosa from Riva is magnificent; its enormous masses, covered with snow and ice, rise at the head of the Val Sesia, and form a scene of extraordinary grandeur.

About 1½ mile above Riva is

*Alagna*, beautifully situated. (Guglielmina's Hotel and Pension Monte Rosa, excellent and much frequented. The landlord also owns the inn on the Col d'Olen. A small inn, by G. Ronco.)

For passes and excursions from Alagna, see Rte. 123.

## ROUTE 120.

### VOGOGNA TO MACUGNAGA, BY THE VAL ANZASCA.

| Vogogna.                | Eng. m. |
|-------------------------|---------|
| Piè de Mulèra . . . . . | 2½      |
| Castiglione . . . . .   | 3       |
| Ponte Grande . . . . .  | 4½      |
| Vanzone . . . . .       | 2       |
| Prequartero . . . . .   | 2½      |
| Pesterena . . . . .     | 3       |
| Macugnaga . . . . .     | 3       |

A good carriage-road from Vogogna to Ceppo Morelli, a little above Vanzone, after that a mule-path. About 7½ hrs. up from Vogogna to Macugnaga, 6 hrs. down; char from Vogogna to Ceppo, 12 fr., to Ponte Grande, 7 fr.

Mules are to be had at Ponte Grande, but not at Ceppo Morelli.

*Val Anzasca* combines all that is most lovely in Italian with all that is most grand in Swiss scenery. The mountain sides are covered with vines, figs, chestnuts, and walnuts, the architecture of Italy is around, the sky of Italy above. Against it rises one of the noblest mountain shapes of the Alps, the great eastern face of Monte Rosa.

It is difficult to decide whether this and the following routes should be taken from the Italian or the Swiss side. The Val Anzasca is certainly seen to greater advantage by the traveller who ascends the valley with Monte Rosa facing him all the way. But the effect of the unrivalled view from the summit of the Moro is enhanced by the abruptness with which it is presented to him who arrives from the Swiss side, and the views in descending the Moro towards the Val Anzasca are finer than on the side of Saas. In either case, the only way to do justice to the attractions of this valley is to halt one or more days at Ponte Grande and Macugnaga. Ladies can cross the Moro with less fatigue from Saas than from Macugnaga, as in the former case they may ride very nearly to the top of the pass.

The inns at Macugnaga are very fair: the inn at Ponte Grande is

tolerable. The other villages are small, and their inns poor.

Travellers descending the Simplon road from Domo d'Ossola turn out of it  $\frac{1}{4}$  m. S. of Pallanzeno, whence a road runs direct to Pié de Muléra. Those going N. from Baveno, cross the Tosa 1 m. N. of Vogogna by a bridge just above the influx of the Anza.

*Vogogna* 741 ft. (Rte. 111) is on the Simplon-road,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  m. below Domo, at the confluence of the Anza with the Tosa. Pedestrians may cross the Tosa by a ferry to Pié de Muléra from Vogogna.

*Pié de Muléra* (801 ft.) (Inn: Croce Rossa), the first village in the Val Anzasca.

Here lives the receiver of the gold and other mines situated near the head of the valley.

The road ascends, and traverses two short tunnels in the rock. It is carried high up along the vine-clad slopes, and commands a noble view downwards over the Val d'Ossola and upwards towards Mte. Rosa, coming into sight soon after entering the valley, and gives indescribable beauty to the distance, while the near mountains falling in wooded slopes on either side, form a magnificent foreground. The unrivalled prospect is seen to great advantage just before reaching

*Castiglione* (Inn: Au Rameau). The road leaves rt. *Calasca* (Inn, tolerable), near which there is a pretty waterfall bursting out of the Val Bianca, then descends to the Anza, and runs some distance along its banks.

*Ponte Grande* (Albergo al Ponte Grande, with a fine view; clean and fair). This is the central point of the lower Val Anzasca, and the best position for a halt of a few days. (Mules and carriages may be hired here. 1-horse carriage to Ceppo Morelli in 1 hr., 5 fr.) It is a considerable village with a post-office, in a beautiful position at the junction of the Val Ollocchia with Val Anzasca, and receives its name from a bridge of a single arch across the Anza. Here, and elsewhere in Val Anzasca, the neat dress of the women, the general cleanliness of the people, their cheer-

fulness and independence, and the rareness of goître, will be remarked with pleasure, as contrasting with other parts of Piedmont.

To the S., through *Bannio*, on the opposite bank, are the *Barranca Pass* to Fobello in Val Mastalone in 5 hrs., and the *Col d'Egua* to Rimasco in Val Sermenta, in  $7\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. (Rte. 122).

*Vanzone* (2280 ft.) (Inn: H. des Chasseurs, poor). See the view from the terrace in front of the chapel, a little above the town.

*Ceppo Morelli* (Inn: H. des Alpes, though small, can furnish a tolerable bed or luncheon). Here the carriage-road ends. There is a remarkable bridge, very steep, springing on one side from a boulder stone. A little way above this village is one of the finest views in the valley, where the vast height of Monte Rosa may be fully appreciated, as it towers into the sky. The women in the upper part of the valley carry burdens like men, and adopt lower garments usually considered peculiar to male attire. There is a short cut for pedestrians from Ceppo Morelli to Campiole, and again from the Ponte del Valt to Borca, along a wooden staging raised above the bed of the stream, and formerly used as a wood-slide.

[At *Prequartero* a path branches off (rt.) into the Saas-Thal by the *Passo del Mondelli*, nearer than the pass by the Moro, but without its fine view of Monte Rosa.]

A spur descending from the Monte della Caccia, called the *Morgen*, here divides the Val Anzasca from the Val Macugnaga or Pestarena. The distinction is further marked by the languages spoken by the people; above this German prevails, below it Italian. This vast mass of mountain nearly closing up the valley, is cleft by a deep and savage gorge for the Anza to escape.

At *Campiole*, where the river issues out of the gorge, the bridle-road crosses to the rt. bank, and passes in a steep ascent over this rocky barrier by the hamlet of *Morgen*, from which sacks of ore descend a wire-rope by their own weight; it next descends

rapidly and returns to the l. bank by the Ponte del Valt. It is proposed to carry the char-road up to

*Pestarena* (Inn: Alb. dei Minieri, rough), a miserable village, whose inhabitants earn their livelihood in the mines of gold, silver, and copper. The gold occurs in very small quantities, combined with (pyrites) sulphuret of iron. The ore is pounded and ground, and the metal is obtained from it by amalgamation in the proportion of 6 grammes, or at the best 10, of gold to 100 kilogrammes of ore. The annual produce is said to be about 2700 oz. There are not many places in Piedmont where gold is found. Brockedon, in consequence, has conjectured that this valley was the seat of the Ictymuli mentioned by Pliny, and traces their name in that of the villages Pié and Cima de *Mul-éra*.

The road ascends steeply, passing the adits of many mines; it is crossed by numerous torrents, which cut it up, or cover it with rubbish, rendering the ascent toilsome.

35 min. above Pestarena, the traveller comes on the very magnificent view of Monte Rosa, at a village called

*Borca* (no good Inn), about 2 m. below Macugnaga; the black-cock is here found. At Borca, and above it, German is the language of the people. The path over the *Turlo Pass* to Alagna (Rte. 123) diverges l. [Pedestrians down the valley may follow the wood-slide path from Borca to the Ponte del Valt, and again from Campiole to Ceppo Morelli. In the gorge it is broken away.]

The commune of *Macugnaga* consists of six hamlets, Pestarona, Borca, in der Stapf, zum Strich, auf der Rive, and Zertannen. Borca is 1½ m., a ¼ hr.'s walk from Pestarena, and as far from the rest, which lie only a few minutes' walk apart from one another.

*Macugnaga* (zum Strich) (Inns: Monte Rosa, by Franz Lochmatter; Monte Moro, fair, lately enlarged. These are good mountain inns, and are now much frequented).—*Guides*: Ferd. and A. Imseng, G. Oberto, with a fair tariff.

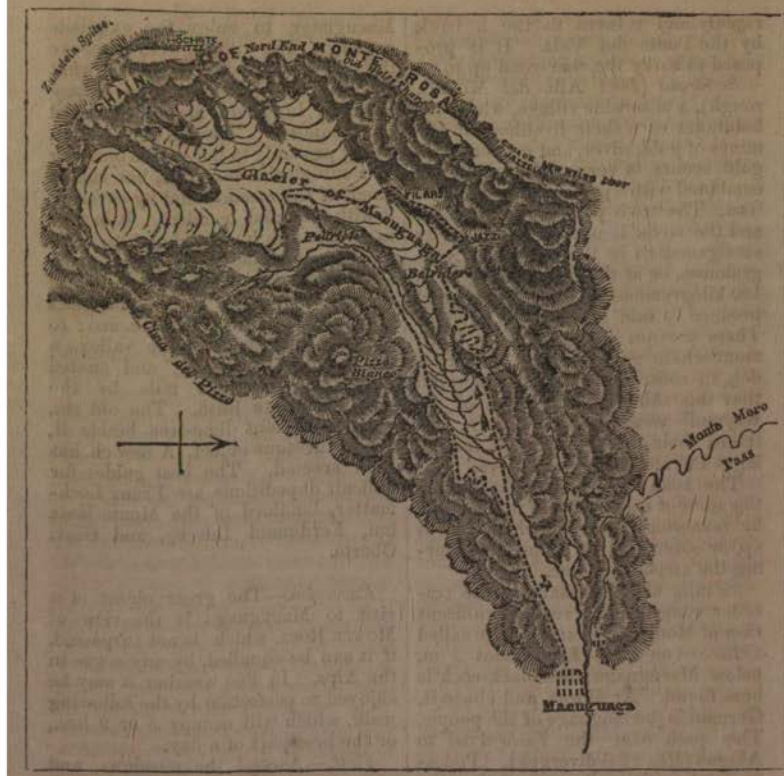
Visitors should stop some days at [Switz.]

Macugnaga to enjoy the exquisite scenery. The village, 5115 ft. above the sea, is situated on the rim of what was till a few years ago a grassy basin or luxuriant meadow, studded with hamlets. The glacier torrent, owing probably to the sudden bursting of a sub-glacial reservoir, has ruined much of the meadowland by covering it with mud and boulders. It is shut in on all sides by towering Alps. To the N. are the exceedingly steep slopes—partly rock, partly turf—of the Moro; to the S. the precipices and forests of the Pizzo Bianco; to the W. the head of the valley, a recess filled with ice, and circled round for many a mile by the cliffs of Monte Rosa. The old ch., with an ancient lime-tree beside it, is a picturesque object. A new ch. has been erected. The best guides for difficult expeditions are Franz Lochmatter, landlord of the Monte Rosa inn, Ferdinand Imseng, and Giov. Oberto.

*Excursion*.—The great object of a visit to Macugnaga is the view of MONTE ROSA, which is not surpassed, if it can be equalled, by any scene in the Alps. In fine weather it may be enjoyed to perfection by the following walk, which will occupy 8 or 9 hrs., or the best part of a day.

*First*.—Ascend the meadows, and after crossing the Anza, mount the huge ancient moraine, now covered with stately pines and called the *Belvedere*, against which the glacier divides into two ice-streams. This is one of the finest points of view; and those who are not inclined to make the whole tour may return from it to Macugnaga. Ladies can ascend it part of the way on mules (in 2 hrs.), or the whole way in a chaise-a-porteurs.

*Second*.—Cross the north arm of the glacier to the chalets of Jazi, at the foot of the Cima di Jazi, and walk along the lateral moraine to the chalets of Filar, at the foot of the northernmost peak of Monte Rosa, called the Nord End, and just below the *Old Weiss Thor Pass*.



*Third.*—Cross the moraine, enter upon the glacier, and proceed along it for some distance. The ice is crevassed, but with a guide there is no danger. The surface after a time becomes more even, and may be traversed for a considerable distance, but a convenient goal is a singular waterfall, where a stream precipitates itself into a chasm in the ice. The view from this spot is exceedingly striking; the observer stands in the middle of a vast amphitheatre, of which the snow-clad walls form some of the highest mountains in Europe. Commencing on the east, are the Pizzo Bianco, and Cima del Pizzo, from which a snow-sheeted ridge leads to the great central group of

*Monte Rosa*, whose precipitous sides descend immediately 7000 or 8000 feet in one almost unbroken slope to plunge below the ice on which the traveller stands. Glaciers hang imminent from these amazing crags, and avalanches of great magnitude are often seen to detach themselves and fall with a noise like thunder. From the summits of Monte Rosa another ridge extends northwards to the Cima di Jazi, and then, bending eastwards, to the pass of the Monte Moro, which is well seen.

*Fourth.*—Leave the glacier on its eastern edge, and descend the moraine to the chalets of Pedriolo, near which are some enormous fragments of rock that have probably fallen

from the Pizzo Bianco; one is 500 feet in circumference, and about 120 feet high, and is perhaps the largest block to be found in the Alps.

*Fifth.*—From Pedriolo a return track leads along the mountain-side on the south, often at a great and commanding height, and a steep and intricate descent through the forest brings the traveller back to Macugnaga.

A few words on the topography of Monte Rosa may not be out of place here. It is by no means a single summit, but a *knot* or union of two ridges or chains crossing each other at right angles, so that its ground-plan may be said to resemble a +. The N.E. angle forms the head of the Val Anzasca, and encloses the glacier of Macugnaga, as the N.W. does that of Gorner, at Zermatt: the S.E. is the head of the Val Sesia, and the S.W. under the Lyskamm the cradle of the glacier of the Lys, and head of the valley of Gressoney.

The five principal peaks are ranged along the north ray of the cross, and are all visible from Macugnaga. Beginning at the left hand, or south end, the first is the *Parrot Spitze*; the second the *Signal Kuppe*; the third, a snowy pinnacle, the *Zumstein Spitze* (15,004 ft.); the fourth, a tremendous rocky tooth, the *Höchste Spitze*, whose highest crag is 15,217 feet above the sea; and the fifth, or most northerly, the *Nord End* (15,131 ft.). See Map, p. 358.

The pass from Macugnaga to Zermatt, formerly known as the *Weiss Thor*, lies between the Cima di Jazzi and the Nord End of Monte Rosa, and although occasionally passed by some of the bolder cragsmen, must at all times have been exceedingly difficult and dangerous. It is well known that precipitous rocks often look more formidable than they really are; but even a practised mountaineer, after contemplating the height and steepness of the rocky range which overhangs the Macugnaga glacier, might hesitate before attempting to scale it.

For many years past the guides have asserted that the old pass is no longer practicable, owing to the accumulation of ice over the edge of the precipice, yet it was certainly traversed by M. Adolf Schlagintweit in 1851, and the same or a parallel pass in 1861 by Mr. Tuckett and by Prof. Tyndall, both led by the intrepid guide Bennen. The *New Weiss Thor Pass* is described in Rte. 127. A way to it from Macugnaga, easier but longer than the ordinary rte., is from the top of the Moro pass, by the Seewinen and Schwarzberg glaciers (3 hrs. from col to col).

In July 1872 an ascent was made direct from the Macugnaga gl. to the *Höchste Spitze*. Its possibility had been conceived by a Saas man, Ferdinand Imseng, settled at Macugnaga, and under his guidance the Messrs. Pendlebury, the Rev. C. Taylor and 2 other guides reached the top in 13 hrs. from their bivouac, 4½ hrs. above Macugnaga. The point first attained was the *Ost Spitze* of the double-toothed summit.

Visitors who return by the Val Anzasca, should devote a day to the ascent of the Monte Moro pass, and, if possible, of the *Joderlurn*, to the E. of it. A far grander summit is the *Pizzo Bianco* (10,190 ft.), reached in 6 hrs. up, 3 down. Macugnaga is a resting-place on the *tour of Monte Rosa* by glacier passes (see Zermatt). The mountaineer reaches it by the *New Weiss Thor*, and leaves it by the

*Col delle Loccie*, over the ridge connecting the Monte delle Loccie with the Signal Kuppe, and leading to the head of the Val Sesia. This is a fine but difficult pass, only fit for practised mountaineers, about 12,000 ft., and 15 hrs. to Alagna. It is best taken from this side. The way to it lies along the glacier as far as possible, then by a climb on the rocks to the rt., and finally by an exceedingly steep ice-slope. The descent to Val Sesia is comparatively easy.

The *Turlo Pass* to Alagna is described in Rte. 123.

## ROUTE 121.

## A. MACUGNAGA TO VISP—MONTE MORO—SAAS.

## B. PASSES OF THE FLETSCHHORN RANGE.

## C. PASSES OF THE SAASGRAT.

| Macugnaga.                    | Hrs. |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Summit of Moro Pass . . . . . | 4    |
| Mattmark See . . . . .        | 2    |
| Saas . . . . .                | 3    |
| Stalden . . . . .             | 3½   |
| Visp . . . . .                | 1½   |

The pass of Monte Moro is one of the least difficult over the main chain between the Great St. Bernard and the Simplon: still it is not practicable for horses, though there are traces both on it and the neighbouring Antrona Pass of old paved horse-roads.

Near it occur a number of names which lend themselves to an Arabic derivation, and have been considered as evidence of the establishment here of a colony of the Saracens, who in the 10th century infested the Alpine Passes and robbed and murdered pilgrims (Rte. 135, and Alp. Journal, Nos. 64 and 65).

The following list and derivations have been given: *Mte. Moro* itself; *Calasca* (Kafah, "a castle"—cf. the *alcalas* and *calatas* in Spain and Sicily); the hamlet *Morghen*; *Almagel* (Al-mahal, "the station"); *Mattmark* (Matt mar, "the Moor's meadow"); *Eyen* (Äin, "a fountain"); *Distel Alp* (?); *Allalein* (Alâ l'ain, "at the source"—a very graphic name for its position in reference to the ice cataract and the Visp torrent; *Mischabel* (pronounced like "Mi-ge-bel," (?) Mont Gibello); *Balferin*, "the peak with 2 sources." It appears, however, at least open to doubt whether in a district where a Teutonic has superseded a Celtic tongue these names may not all be explicable without recourse being had to the hypothesis of a settlement of Saracens, which appears, so far as this valley is concerned, to be unsupported by any other local or historical evidence. The Saas passes are not mentioned by the chroniclers of the 10th century as among the frequented routes to Rome, and a

history of the valley compiled by a priest of the place about A.D. 1810, from 300 ancient local documents, does not appear to supply any confirmation to the story of the Saracens.

Some of the derivations quoted above are certainly false, e.g. *Balferin* is Balenfirn; *Almagel* was written formerly Almengall. The ancient form of Mattmark was Mundmar or Montmar. Distel = thistle; and in the Vispthal Misch-gabel = a hayfork. *Allalein* may be compared to *Cols* and *Alps de lu lei* in the W. Alps, and a "Lei See" is shown close to Zermatt on the S. Alp. Club Map. The settlement of Saracens at Saas is far from impossible or even improbable; but further proof seems to be required before it can be affirmed as an historical fact. If Saracens reached this part of the Alps at all, they probably came from the S., as no record exists of their having attacked Sion on the road.

The pass of the Moro, and another on the rt. into the Val Antrona, are mentioned in a record of 1440 as "*fort vieux passages*," and great expenses were incurred in 1724, and again in 1790, in the endeavour to restore them, but the new repairs were soon destroyed by avalanches.

The S. side of the pass is too rugged for mules, but on the N. they can go as far as Telliboden within an hour of the summit, and therefore those who cannot walk well can make the pass best from the N. *Chaises-à-porteurs* can be had at Macugnaga, but the charges are high. In fine weather the pass might, by those who have had experience in mountains, be taken without a guide.

The ascent is a steady and steep pull of four hours. The path lies at first through a straggling forest, but the green alp is soon attained, and the scene thence presented is most magnificent—all the splendour of Mte. Rosa is open to the view, from its peaks, still thousands of feet above the spectator, to the basin of Macugnaga, now far below. Such a scene cannot be conceived, and once beheld can never be forgotten. From the high pastures the path traverses a stony and barren

slope to a small bed of snow which it is necessary to cross. On the summit, amidst a heap of stones, a cross is placed, and the traveller looks down the other side towards the Valais, and upon a scene of sterility which has no relief.

It is well worth while to ascend the *Joderhorn*, a point E. of the summit of the pass. The view of Monte Rosa is not finer, for, in truth, that cannot be surpassed, but the eye is enabled to contrast it with the distant plain of N. Italy and the southern ranges of the Alps. Without going so far, the traveller may extend the view by mounting the rocks behind the wooden cross; from that vantage-ground he will see Monte Rosa on one hand, and the whole extent of the Saas valley on the other.

The summit of the pass of the *Monte Moro* is 9390 English feet above the sea. The descent on the Swiss side is singularly wild; at first by a steep bed of snow, and then along an ancient path formed of slabs of stone; in places by steps cut in the precipices, and overhanging a deep hollow into which the Telliboden glacier streams down from the *Joderhorn*. This cold and dreary ice-basin, and the slopes and heaps of disintegrated rocks around it, form a picture of solitude and desolation. At length the paved road is left, and no vestige of it can be traced: it has been destroyed by the snow and stones which have been precipitated from above. The track winds down the talus formed by these repeated falls, to reach the scanty herbage of the Distel Alp.

The *châlets* of *Distel* furnish milk, cheese, and eggs, but are deserted early in the autumn.

[To the rt. a lonely track up the Ofenthal crosses the mountains into the *Val Antrona* (Rte. 111). The *Passo d'Antigine* (9311 ft.) is reached in 2½ hrs. by the Ofenthal glacier from *Mattmark*. A descent of 2½ hrs. leads to the *Cingino Alp*, on the route of the Saas Pass (see below).]

From *Distel* the path continues on the rt. bank of the stream all the way to *Saas*. After quitting the

*châlets*, it leads down, in ½ hr., to a grey, desolate lake called the

*Mattmark See* (6965 ft.), formed by the advance of the *Allalein* glacier. The *Inn* is tolerable, and forms a convenient stopping-place for travellers, enabling them to shorten the journey to *Macugnaga* by 3 hrs., and to reach the top of the *Monte Moro* in the early morning, when the view of *Monte Rosa* is less frequently obscured by mists. The scenery of the *Mattmark See* is extremely desolate; the valley a mere driftway for snow and wind. To the W. is the *Schwarzberg* glacier, far withdrawn up the mountain side, but which formerly extended to the *Moro* path. It has left a tide-mark in the enormous serpentine boulder close to the inn (*Weissthor* and *Adler passes*—see below). On the N. the *Allalein* glacier bounds the lake, in fact, dams the upper valley, whose waters drain under it, issuing out of a grotto at the other side. In 1833 this outlet became closed, and it was necessary to blast the ice to reopen it.

From *Mattmark* the *bridle-path* to *Saas* skirts the lake, and to turn its barrier of ice rises on the mountain side, with a view of the glacier. It then descends by zigzags to the more cheerful lower valley. Precipices rise on the l., and, looking back, the cold masses of the *Allalein* close the view. The path runs amid stony channels, and a wilderness of rock and brushwood to

*Z'meigeren*, whence there is a rough rte. (see below) to the *Val Antrona*.

*Almagel*. Before reaching it, larches and pines are passed, but they are stunted from their great elevation. After crossing a little plain, the path leads down to *Saas*, under the forest-clad slopes of the *Mittaghorn*. To the rt. the *Lehmbach* descends in a fine fall, and the path of the *Zwischbergen Pass* diverges (see below).

*Saas*, or *Im Grund* (5125 ft.), is the principal commune of the valley (*Inns*: H. du *Mont Moro*).

*Saas* has not as yet become frequented, partly perhaps because the

view from the village itself gives little idea of the surrounding scenery, but principally owing to the apathy of its inhabitants who have never yet maintained a good inn. A very small fraction of the enterprise and capital which have been expended in other parts of Switzerland in ill-considered speculations would have restored the old mule-road over the Moro, kept up inns at Saas and Fée, and insured the prosperity of the valley. The scenery near at hand is not surpassed in the Alps, and by its scale and sublimity will recall to Eastern travellers still loftier chains. Here lived the enthusiastic mountaineer *Herr Imseu*, parish priest of Saas, the discoverer of the Adler Pass. He was drowned in the Mattmark See in 1869. Moritz Zurbürken, Alex. Burgener and his two brothers, S. Petrus, S. M. Lochmatter, and Joseph Venetz, are good guides. Glacier expeditions by tariff, 20 to 30 frs.

Saas stands in a basin shut in by lofty mountains—on the W. the Saas Grat, on the E. the chain of the Fletschhörner. The Saas Grat is not seen from the village, lower ranges intercepting the view. To the N. the Bietschhorn forms a fine background to the valley. The plain of Saas is nearly 1 m. long, and its verdant meadows are refreshing to a traveller who has descended from the sterile upper valley.

Everyone should visit the valley and hamlet of Fée, surrounded by lofty peaks, a walk or ride of 2 hrs., but the excursion may be prolonged to 5 or 6, by visiting the Gletscher Alp. A short ascent through the forest direct from the inn, or another path leading upwards by the Fée Chapel and its stations, lands the traveller on a fertile upland of considerable extent, dotted with chalets, and at its head encircled by an amphitheatre of glaciers, on a splendid scale, and by the high summits which separate the Saas and Zermatt valleys, S. the *Allaleinhorn*, 13,255 ft., then the *Alphubel*, 13,803 ft., and W. the two principal *Mischelhörner* — *Täschhorn*, and *Dom*. The

height of the latter is 14,941 ft., or 915 ft. higher than the Finsteraarhorn; it is the highest mountain entirely in Switzerland. This upland valley is one of the most remarkable spots in the Alps. Alpine meadows and peaceful homesteads are here found in the immediate vicinity of great glaciers and some of the most stupendous precipices in Europe. The contrast is superb, and few visitors quit Fée without a feeling of regret that there is no "inn in the foreground." In the midst of the glaciers is a singular green slope, almost an island in the sea of ice, called the *Gletscher Alp*, which is used as a pasture in summer, when it is a perfect garden of wild flowers. It is 2 hrs. from Saas, and may be reached through a gorge between the 2 branches of the glacier which of late years has retreated so as to leave ample room for passage.

The *Trift Alp* ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr.) commands a view of the Saasgrat opposite, preferred by some good judges to that from Fée. Moderate pedestrians may mount to the *Triftgrätli*, a spur of the *Trifthorn*.

The *Egginerhorn* and *Mittaghorn* at the S.E. horn of the crescent of mountains enclosing the Fée valley are also easy of access and command splendid views.

#### *The Fletschhorn Range.*

East of Saas, the high range, comprehending the *Fletschhorn* and *Weissmies*, both exceeding 13,000 ft. in height, abounds in interest. A short time ago it was little known, but of late years adventurous climbers have penetrated its recesses and traversed it at several points.

a. The *Passo d'Antrona* (9331 ft.) leads from Almagel to the Val Antrona, below Domo d'Ossola, by the *Furggethal*, a desolate valley slanting S.E. up the mountain-side: the passage of the Furgge glacier, under the *Stellhorn*, offers no difficulty, and the descent to Piedmont is free from ice, but very steep. There used to be a mule-road, of which portions still remain. [North of the col, there is a point called the *Latelhorn* (10,525 ft.),

which juts out like a belvedere, and commands a superb view over the Alps from Monte Rosa to the Tyrol, with the subordinate ranges of Piedmont, Tessin, and Lombardy. This point is easy of access. Horses can go within  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr., or less, of the top; and the remainder of the ascent, except just the horn itself for some 200 ft., is easy. There are beds of snow, but no ice to cross. By a tolerable walker the excursion from Saas and back may be made in 10 hrs., allowing 1 hr. on the top, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. for refreshment.] The descent from the pass leads past the Cingino Alp to Antrona in about 4 hrs.

*b. Zwischbergen Pass, from Almagel* (1 hr. above Saas) to Isella in 11 hrs. The path ascends on the S. side of the waterfall, behind Almagel, steeply for 2 hrs., then for 1 hr. over grass to chalets, whence are seen the *Hörnli-nen*, 3 finger-shaped peaks, close to which lies the pass. Mounting towards them l. the snow is reached, and ascended, the final snow-field not straight towards a tempting depression, but l. in a slanting direction to rocks by which the *col* is gained. It is 10,742 ft. above the sea, and commands a most superb view of the Saasgrat, the range of Monte Rosa, and eastwards of Lago Maggiore, &c. The descent is steep down glacier and moraine, keeping l. until the grass is attained. Then by an easy slope to the head of a gully, an important point to hit. So far a guide is desirable. This is descended in zigzags. Below it, for a mile or so, the track crosses the débris of numerous avalanches, and then runs down the l. bank of the stream to Gondo. The upper part of the valley, or Zwischbergen Thal, is wild and barren; the lower, Val Varia, grand and beautiful. [The traveller can steer direct for Domo by the Val Bugnanco. The rte. is seen from the *col*. From the bottom of the gully an ascent must be made diagonally to the rt., passing small lakes, to the *Col Pontina*. Descent to Bugnanco (an Inn), 2 hrs. from Domo d'Ossola.] The passes over the highest portion

of the chain descend to the village of Simplon. The furthest to the S. is on the S. side of the Weissmies, and called the

*c. Thäli Joch*. It is reached by the Zwischbergen glacier, and is said to be not very difficult. The descent to the Laquin Thal lies down a ridge between the Laquin and Thäli glaciers. Time about 11 hrs. The next is the

*d. Laquin Joch* (11,500 ft.), between the Weissmies and the Laquinhorn. The ascent is by the ridge between the two branches of the Trift glacier. From the *col* the traveller bears to the l. and clammers down very steep rocks to the Laquin glacier. Having crossed a small glacier after the rocks are left, a path will be found which winds round the hill, and avoids the descent into the Laquin Thal. About 11 hrs. are allowed to Simplon.

*e. The Fletsch Joch* (12,103 ft.) is a passage made between the two peaks of the Fletschhörner, but so perilous from falling stones, and the steepness of the rocks and couloirs on the Simplon side, that the feat is not likely to be often repeated.

N. of the Rossbodenhorn are three comparatively easy glacier passes. The first of these is highly recommended to climbers, the *Rossboden Joch* (11,000 ft.) by the Gamser and Mattwald glacier, from Simplon to Saas in 9 hrs. There are some very steep rocks to be climbed in order to reach the Gamser glacier. The other two passes, the *Gamser Joch* and the *Simmeli Pass*, lead from the Gamser Glacier to the Saas Thal, and to reach either of them it is necessary first to cross the Sirvolten Pass. By either it is 8 or 9 hrs. from Saas to Simplon. The Simmeli Pass is the lowest and most northerly.

The peaks of this range can all be attained from the Saas side.

The *Weissmies* (13,225 ft.) may be reached either via the Triftgrätli or the Portiengrat. It has the advantage of being equally accessible on the Simplon side, so that travellers may pass over its summit. Ascent 8 hrs.

The *Laquinhorn*, recently ascertained to be the highest (13,323 ft.) can also

be climbed either from Saas or Simplon. It is rather fatiguing than difficult from the W.

The *Fletschhorn* (or *Rosbodenhorn*), (12,851 ft.) is a somewhat more difficult ascent.

### *The Saasgrat.*

The valleys of Saas and Zermatt are separated by the noble range of mountains known as the Saasgrat, of which the chief summits and passes, in their order N. of the Cima di Jazi, are as follow:—*New Weiss Thor Pass*, *Strahlhorn*, *Adler Pass*, *Rympfischhorn*, *Allalein Pass*, *Allaleinhorn*, *Alphubel Pass*, *Alphubel*, *Mischabel Pass*, *Täschhorn*, *Dom*, *Nadelhorn*, *Ulrichshorn*, *Gassenried Pass*, *Balferin*.

Three of these high passes lead from the Mattmark See, but one of them—the *Adler*—is better taken from the Zermatt side.

a. The *Schwarzberg*, or *New Weiss Thor Pass*, the most direct and easiest pass to the Riffel, mounts a grass-grown moraine on the N. side of the *Schwarzberg* glacier to a point above the ice-fall where the glacier is entered upon, and ascended by bearing to the l. towards a crest overhanging the *Macugnaga* valley. This is a narrow ridge of snow (the *arête blanche*), and has to be traversed to the rocks which form the col, 11,851 ft. above the sea. Here the *Strahlhorn*, cased in ice, rises close on the N., and there is a glorious view over Italy. The descent is along rolling fields of *névé*, to the *Gorner* glacier for the Riffel, to the *Findelen* glacier for Zermatt. Time from 9 to 12 hrs. The rte. to the

b. *Adler Pass* (discovered in 1848 by Herr Imseng, late curé of Saas) crosses the shoulder of the ridge which, descending from the *Strahlhorn*, separates the *Allalein* and *Schwarzberg* glaciers. The upper portion of the *Allalein* is then traversed by a circuitous course, running to the N. side under the *Allaleinhorn* (13,235 ft.), and bending round to the S.W. corner, where the col, 12,461 ft., lies between the craggy

*Rympfischhorn* (13,790 ft.) and the *Strahlhorn* (13,750 ft.). The view is magnificent. The *Monte Rosa* chain is splendidly seen; but the mountaineer will aim at a still finer view by climbing the *Strahlhorn*, an hour's ascent by an easy snow-slope. The descent from the col is the well-known difficulty of this route, and may entail a considerable amount of step-cutting down a wall of ice. It lands the traveller on the head of the *Findelen* glacier, which, for some distance, is so crevassed that it requires skill to effect a passage. When this has been accomplished the dangers are over, and the traveller hastens down easier slopes either to the Riffel or Zermatt. Fully 10 hrs. should be allowed.

c. The *Allalein Pass* is the most ancient and the easiest, but the lowest and least interesting of the passes between the Saas Thal and Zermatt, and is now seldom used. The track is the same as that of the *Adler* to the head of the *Allalein* glacier, where the col (11,654 ft.) lies N.W., between the *Rympfischhorn* and *Allaleinhorn*. The descent is by the *Täsch* glacier and rocks to the *Täsch Alp*, from which there is a path along the mountain-side to Zermatt. Time 9 hrs.

The three next passes start from Saas.

d. The most used is the *Alphubeljoch* (12,476 ft.), about 11 hrs. walking from Zermatt to Saas, or *vice versa*. It is an easy glacier pass in fine weather, but may be found very fatiguing when the snow is soft. The scenery is throughout fine, and the view from the crest superb.

e. The *Mischabeljoch* (12,850 ft.) is higher, somewhat more direct, and, unless the glacier on the Saas side is highly crevassed, scarcely longer and perhaps even more interesting. On descending it is necessary to avoid the ice-fall of the *Weingarten* Glacier, by taking to the rocks on its left bank. This pass was crossed in 1867, under favourable circumstances, in 10 hrs.

The ways forced over the highest crest of the *Mischabel* by trained

mountaineers with first-rate guides are not, in any legitimate sense of the word, passes, and are not therefore described here.

f. E. of St. Niklaus the *Gassenried Glacier* descends from the northern peaks of the *Mischabelhörner*, and by the *Gassenried Pass* at its head a difficult passage can be made from Saas in about 10 hrs. The rte. ascends by the N. side of the *Hochbalm Glacier* from the *Fée Valley*, crossing the mountain by the *névé* between the *Ulrichshorn* (or Little *Mischabel*) and *Balferin*.

The *Alphubel* is easily climbed from the pass of the same name (Rte 127). The *Dom* and *Täschhorn* have also been reached from Saas by first-rate mountaineers and guides; but these are feats not to be imitated except by parties similarly constituted, and by these only under favourable conditions. The remaining peaks are generally climbed from *Zermatt* (Rte. 127).

From Saas, by *Stalden* to *Visp*, 5 hrs., is a good bridle-path. The scenery is often extremely beautiful.

Below Saas the valley contracts and forms a defile, which enlarges into a little mountain-enclosed plain by the village of *Balen*, at the foot of the sharp-pointed snow-peak of the *Balferin*, first ascended, 1862, by Mr. and Mrs. R. Watson and the curé Herr *Imseng*. The path here crosses and recrosses the *Vispbach*, and the valley soon closes into a narrow gorge, where the track is forced to mount high above the torrent. Many wooden crosses, memorials of accidents from snow and avalanches, are passed. In 3 hrs. from Saas the valley suddenly enlarges at the junction of the *Saaser Visp* with the main stream of the *Gorner Visp* descending from *Zermatt*. [From this point at the top of the descent to *Stalden* there is a short cut for pedestrians to St. Niklaus round the shoulder of the mountain. It leaves the path where there are three remarkably fine pine-trees, and runs by the side of a watercourse (by which a stream is carried from the Saas valley into that of *Zermatt*) and through the forest, descending to the bridge between *Stalden* and St. Ni-

klaus]. At the foot of a steep hill the path crosses the *Kinnbrücke*, a single arch, 150 ft. above the stream, and enters

*Stalden*, about 5 m. above *Visp*. (See Rtes. 56 and 126.)

## ROUTE 122.

VARALLO TO THE VAL ANZASCA, BY THE VAL MASTALONE, OR BY VAL SERMENTA.

There are 4 routes by which travellers may reach the *Val Anzasca* from *Varallo*, all to be preferred to the dull and laborious pass of the *Turlo*. (Rte. 123.)

a. The easiest and perhaps the most beautiful route is through the *Val Mastalone*, and over the *Barranca Pass*. There is a good carr.-road from *Varallo* to *Fobello*. From thence *Ponte Grande* is reached in 5 hrs.' walking. Mules can be taken over the pass, but it is advisable to walk a part of the descent on either side.

*Val Mastalone* is celebrated as one of the most picturesque of the lesser valleys of the Italian Alps.

For the first league from *Varallo* the valley gradually contracts till the road reaches a remarkable gorge where the river, hemmed in by vertical rocks 150 ft. high, is spanned by a stone arch called the *Ponte della Gula*, too narrow for wheel-vehicles. Another bridge bears the carriage-road. The scenery for the entire distance is of the most exquisite character, the vegetation being even richer than in the *Val Sesia*, and the landscape, owing to the bends of the valley, changing at every moment. About 10 m. from *Varallo* the valley divides; the rt. branch leads to *Rimella*, and to passes into the valleys *Strona* and *Anzasca* (Rte. 118), the l. grows narrower and steeper, and then suddenly opening discloses a rich scene of wooded mountain and meadow, and the little village of

*Fobello* (*Iuss*; Italy, very good; Reale). This valley is the cradle of

cooks, who migrate hence all over Europe. Beyond Fobello the upper end of the Val Mastalone is open and bare of foliage, and the ascent to the *Barranca Pass* steep. The summit (5759 ft.), on which there is a small oratory, reached in 3 hrs. from Fobello, has some open undulating ground to the l., where the track from the Col d'Egua falls in. On the rt. rises the *Pizzo del Moro*, a beautiful point of view easily ascended from Fobello. From the tempting hill on the l. the prospect is not improved. The descent towards the Val Olloccia is abrupt, and the view over the Val Anzasca magnificent. The *Val Olloccia*, a tributary of the Val Anzasca, was one of the most richly-wooded of the southern valleys, but for some years the axe has been at work, and much fine timber has been felled. The path passes through

*Bunnio*, on a height above the Anza, and Monte Rosa comes into view as the path descends to

*Ponte Grande*, 2 hrs. from the top of the pass. Here the traveller finds very fair quarters (Alb. al Ponte Grande) (Rte. 121).

b. There is another pass, the *Col d'Orchetta*, from the eastern or Rimella branch of *Val Mastalone*. It is rather more direct, but less easy than the *Barranca*. (See Rte. 118.)

c. Parallel to the Val Mastalone is another valley almost equally beautiful, called the *Val Sermenta*, or *Val Piccola*, to distinguish it from the Val Grande, or main valley of the Sesia. It branches from the latter at the hamlet of Balmuccia, 7 m. from Varallo (Rte. 119). The lower part of the Val Sermenta is very narrow and tortuous, particularly near the entrance, where an isolated rock, called the *Torre di Buccioleto*, towers up to a height of 328 ft.: a char-road is in progress as far as Rimasco. Passing the villages *Buccioleto* and *Fervento*, for which the contracted valley scarcely affords space, in 2½ hrs. from Balmuccia the mule-path reaches

*Rimasco*, where there is a rude but tolerable *lun*, with baths, kept by very civil people. This, the chief village in

the valley, is situated just at the fork where it divides into 2 branches; that on the l. leading through grand scenery to the German village of Rima, while the rt. branch leads to the Val Anzasca by Carcoforo.

[From *Rima* there are two, if not three, passes leading to Alagna. The preferable one is the Col di Moud, commanding in the descent beautiful views of Monte Rosa. There is another track mounting steeply to the westward, by which the Turlo pass is gained close to the summit of the ridge. (See Rte. 123.)]

Above Rimasco the rt. hand valley becomes more wild and open, and in 1½ hr. the track reaches the last village—

*Carcoforo*, where there is a poor *lun*, not very bad. From hence the traveller has the choice of 2 routes to the Val Anzasca, but even if bound for the head of that valley he will do better to take the Col d'Egua, leading to Ponte Grande, so as to enjoy the glorious walk from that village to Macugnaga.

The *Col d'Egua* (7060 ft.) is reached in 2 hrs. from Carcoforo by a rather steep and continuous ascent. The summit, when clear, commands a very grand view, similar to that from the Col di Campello (Rte. 118). From the top there is a rapid descent over rough ground to the undulating ridge which forms the summit of the *Barranca Pass* above described. The track, which is ill-marked, joins that from Fobello close to the small oratory. The descent to Bannio and Ponte Grande has been already described. Time from Carcoforo to Ponte Grande, 5½ hrs.

d. Travellers pressed for time, and wishing to reach Macugnaga in one long day from Varallo, may take a pass, which diverges from that last described, at the village of Carcoforo, about the same height, but more interesting than that of the Turlo (see Rte. 123). The ascent from Carcoforo is very steep; and it takes more than 3 hrs. to reach the summit of the *Bocchetta di Carcoforo*. This commands a magnificent view of Monte Rosa and the Saas Grat. On the other

side there is a faintly marked track along a steep slope until an abandoned mine (gold?) is reached. Below this the path descends into the short

*Val Quarazzola*, a branch of, or rather a recess in, the *Val Quarazza*, down which runs the path from the Turlo. The guides usually descend to Borca, but this is unnecessary, as there is a shorter track to Macugnaga by the S. side of the Anza. Time from Balmuccia, 10 hrs.' steady walking, exclusive of halts.

The trout-fishing is reported to be very good in the valleys Sermenta and Mastalone. In both the beauty of the scenery is greatly increased by the brilliant aqua-marine green of the water and the abundant woods.

### ROUTE 123.

MACUGNAGA \* TO GRESSONEY, BY THE TURLO PASS, COL D'OLLEN, OR COL DI VAL DOBBIA.

The most direct, but least interesting, route for travellers making the tour of Monte Rosa is to proceed from Macugnaga to Alagna by the Turlo Pass. It presents no difficulty to the practised pedestrian, but the way may easily be lost in bad weather. The regular track commences at Borca, but some time is saved by crossing the Anza below Macugnaga and taking a shorter path. The lower part of the *Val Quarazza* is pleasing and the ascent gentle. After ascending for about 1½ hr. the traveller finds himself at the base of a steep rocky range which encircles the head of the valley. The slopes, which occur in the intervals between the outcropping walls of bare rock, are covered with rhododendron and other stunted Alpine shrubs. It is most prudent to keep to the track, which is ill-marked, but in descending on this side the mountaineer will make short work of these slopes. Towards the summit is a rather long and steep bed of snow, tiresome enough to mount,

but easy in the descent. The actual summit of the pass (9088 ft.) is marked by a cross, and is a mere sharp ridge of rock forming the prolongation of a great spur which extends from the Signal-Kuppe between the valleys of Anzasca and Sesia. A little S.E. of the cross are some rocks which command an extensive view towards the Lago Maggiore and the mountains beyond it, but the higher summits of Monte Rosa are not visible. It will take 4½ hrs. to reach the top of the pass from Macugnaga. On the S.W. side the track, when not covered with snow, is better marked. It winds round the N. side of a hollow filled with snow, and continues for some time nearly due S., in places over scattered débris, where it is easily lost. It then bears away to the westward until it reaches a group of miserable-looking chalets, beyond which is the final descent into the deep and narrow Val Sesia, which is reached at a very beautiful point, by a waterfall and a bridge over the Sesia. Thence nearly an hour's walk to Alagna, through romantic scenery, by a winding path, which for some little distance passes a chaos of enormous mossy rocks. 8 hrs., exclusive of stoppages, should be allowed for the pass, but it may be accomplished in 6 hrs.

*Alagna*, 3953 ft. (*Hotel*: Monte Rosa, good, clean, and moderate, with a capital cuisine; a new *Inn* (1878), by G. Ronco), though in the immediate neighbourhood of magnificent scenery, is so shut in by mountains that it does not command any view of the peaks of Monte Rosa. This village has of late years become a favourite resort of Italian society, and the accommodation is excellent. Joseph and Pierre Guglielmina are fair guides.

Visitors to Alagna should walk up the valley to the foot of the Turlo Pass, and they may extend the excursion to the *Pile Alp* and the *Val d'Embourgs*. For the first hour the track crosses and recrosses the Sesia, passing, about 2 m. from Alagna, the abandoned gold-mine of *Aries*. Beyond this a wayside oratory is

passed close to the bridge over which the ascent to the Turlo commences. The path to the Pile Alp mounts the opposite side by a steep staircase of rock on the slope of the *Staffelberg*, which is the mountain that shuts out from Alagna the view of Monte Rosa. After passing a cluster of poor chalets the traveller reaches in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from Alagna a point which commands an admirable view of the S.E. portion of Monte Rosa.

On the left is seen one of the peaks (but not the highest point) of the Vincent-Pyramide, next, in the background, the Schwarzhorn and Ludwigshöhe, then the Parrot-Spitze, and lastly the grand mass of the *Signal-Kuppe*. The latter peak (14,964 ft. in height) was ascended as early as 1842 by the late M. Gnifetti, *curé* of Alagna. Those who desire a nearer view of these grand peaks will be well rewarded if they push on from the Pile Alp to the ridge N. of the valley, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. farther. At the head of the Val d'Embours is a fine waterfall fed by the snows of Monte Rosa, and descending from a great height. In the same direction is the

*Col delle Piscie*, 10,374 ft., on the ridge which runs S. from the *Vincent-Pyramide* (13,859 ft.). From the Embours Glacier the ascent is by rather difficult rocks, but the pass is easy on the other side, where a gold mine was formerly worked.

The *Vincenthütte*, a ruined shelter at the top, was built by the miners, and on the slopes below it are remains of a mule-path, which was carried to within 700 ft. of the col.

By this a mountaineer may reach the Val de Lys, either joining the path from the Col d'Ollen, near the Gabiet-See, or descending by the E. side of the Lys Glacier. It is also possible to reach the inn on the Col d'Ollen from the Val di Bours.

The Val Sesia terminates in the Sesia Glacier, which stretches down from the peaks of Monte Rosa, and there are several passes out of the valley from this ice-field. The two

first-mentioned are formidable, except to trained mountaineers.

*Col delle Loccie*, to Macugnaga, mentioned in Rte. 121. Another up the face of Monte Rosa to the Riffel. This, the highest in the Alps, is called the

*Sesia-Joch*, and was first accomplished by Messrs. George and Moore in 1862. They started from a chalet opposite the Pile Alp, and in 13 hrs. climbed to a gap (14,465 ft.) close to the Parrot-Spitze, but by so steep a wall that in places they could see nothing below them but the glacier. The Riffel was reached in 18 hrs. Some years later, two ladies descended this wall to Alagna. The pass is a very severe one, but under favourable circumstances does not seem to be exceptionally dangerous taken from this side.

A long but interesting ascent from Alagna is that of the

*Corno Bianco*, 11,014 ft., the highest point in the ranges S. of Monte Rosa. It lies between Alagna and Gressoney, and can be climbed on the S. side, from either place, without serious difficulty.

Alagna is the meeting-place of several routes on the Italian side. That from Varallo by the Val Sesia has been described in Rte. 119. The traveller bound for the Val Anzasca may best take either the *Col di Moud*, or the *Col di Rima*, both leading to Rima in the W. branch of the Val Sermenta. The first-named is the better of the two, and, though unfrequented, is a beautiful and easy pass, reaching Rima in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.— $2\frac{1}{2}$  up,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  down. 2 hrs. farther is Rimasco (Rte. 122).

The two most frequented passes from Val Sesia to the Val de Lys are the *Col d'Ollen*, commencing at Alagna, and the *Col di Val Dobbia*, starting from Riva,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. below Alagna. The first is a beautiful and grand pass, by far the more interesting, and should always be preferred now that an inn has been opened on the top.

a. The ascent to the *Col d'Ollen* begins immediately above the village,

and occupies  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.; for the last hour the path is steep.

The rte. passes through beautiful meadows in the Val d'Ollen, ascends a wooded steep to the green alp, which is traversed for some time, to the stony slopes leading up to the col (9544 ft.). Close to it an *Inn*—the highest in Europe, with 30 beds—has been opened by the landlord of the Monte Rosa at Alagna. It is excellently kept. From the house there is a noble view eastward over Lago Maggiore. From the pass, or better from the Gemstein, 20 min. above it, the head of the Lysthal, and the Lys Glacier, stretching down in magnificent branches from the Lyskamm, with the peaks of Monte Rosa, are well seen. The glacier view is of course inferior to that from the Riffl, and the outline of the Monte Rosa range from this side is comparatively tame, but this is compensated for by the majestic expanse of plain and Alps, extending from the Monte Viso to the Adamello group, brought before the traveller's eyes.

[The *Inn* is an excellent starting-point for mountaineers, who can easily reach the crest of the chain at the *Lysjoch* in 5 hrs., and the Riffl *Inn* in 10. More adventurous climbers may gain in the day any of the peaks (except the Nord End) of Monte Rosa. The *Höchste Spitze* is climbed by the steep rocks of its S. face, which are accessible in several places. The other summits present snow or ice slopes. The safest of all the ways up the Lyskamm is up the rocks on the E. face of the S.E. ridge, and by this to the top. Only 2 hrs. below the Lysjoch, on some rocks amidst the ice, a hut has been constructed by the Italian Alp. Club, where it is possible to sleep.]

To the S. of the Col d'Ollen are grim dark mountains, with beds of ice and snow, and towards the Lys Valley green slopes, from which a ridge rises midway in the course of the descent. A stranger may be puzzled on which side to pass it, as there is little track. He will find a way on either side, but the course is to the rt. Plea-

sant pasturages lead down to the Lys Valley, near the village of *San Giacomo* (rough *Inn*). Hence it is  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.'s walk to *La Trinité* (H. du Lyskamm, fair), whence it is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. further to St. Jean. Close to the road is a picturesque spot on the river. The water has hollowed itself a very deep channel, across which a mass of rock has fallen, forming a natural bridge, which leads to the chapel and some adjacent houses. [If the traveller intends to cross the Betta Furca (see Rte. 125) he may take a track to the rt. at S. Giacomo, at once commencing the ascent of the second pass, but it is a fatiguing day's walk to reach the head of the Val d'Ayas from Alagna.]

b. The route to the *Col di Val Dobbia* starts from Riva (Route 119), and ascends the ravine of the Dobbia, by a long and steep path, in some places overhanging the torrent, in others disputing with it the narrow course through which both must struggle. After passing the miserable hamlet of Grato, and a fine waterfall gushing out to the black ravine, the ascent rises through a pine-forest, and over Alpine pastures, but offers no object of particular interest.

The distance from Riva to the col, which is 8250 ft. above the sea, requires 4 hrs. On the summit there is a *Hospice*—a stone house of 2 stories, which affords acceptable shelter during snow-storms, and is the successor of a hovel which existed here in Saussure's time. It was built at the joint expense of the commune of Riva and of an individual of Gressoney, the Canon Sottile, and is inhabited throughout the year by 2 men who attend to travellers and their wants. The view from the col is comparatively uninteresting, as Monte Rosa is concealed from the traveller. The descent to Gressoney may be easily made in 2 hrs.

*Gressoney* (St. Jean), 4659 ft. (*Inns*: Delapierre's; Monte Rosa, kept by M. Sebastian Linty; both very good.) There are no first-class guides here.

Gressoney properly is the name of

the commune which includes all the upper part of the *Val de Lys*, or *Lysthal*. There are many hamlets scattered along the course of the stream for a distance of about 8 m. The principal one is that of St. Jean. Its situation is charming. It lies in a broad level valley open to the S., elsewhere enclosed by broken and wooded hill-sides, overlooked on the N. by the shining crest of the Lyskamm. The beauty of the scenery, and the comfortable quarters, combine to make this one of the most desirable stopping-places on the Italian side of Monte Rosa; but for those who desire a close acquaintance with the great mountain, the distance of St. Jean from the head of the valley (fully 3 hrs.' walk to the foot of the glacier) is a serious drawback.

In the communes at the heads of the Piedmontese valleys of Monte Rosa the German language is spoken; in the Val Sesia, at Alagna, in the Val Anzasca above Pestarena, and in the Val de Lys at Gressoney, which is the most considerable of the German communes. The people of these communities are as distinct in their manners as in their language from their neighbours lower down the valleys, with whom they hold little intercourse: they encourage a pride of birth and birthplace which maintains the separation. At Gressoney this is perhaps more strongly exemplified than in any other district. Here the natives are distinguished for their honesty and industry, and few communities have a higher moral tone. Crime is almost unknown: and if disputes arise, the syndic or magistrate elected by the inhabitants hears the complaint, and effects an amicable settlement. They possess many of those comforts which an Englishman appreciates. Their education and attainments are of a higher order than is usually found in such a class, especially among mountains. Many of their young men have distinguished themselves when they have gone abroad in the world. They have risen to be merchants and bankers, and many from among them have become eminent for learning and

science, and reflected honour on the little community located in this Alpine solitude. Among these was Herr Zumstein, better known in the Val Sesia as M. de la Pierre, inspector of the forests of the Val Sesia, who long since explored the flanks and ascended one of the summits of Monte Rosa, and gave great assistance to Colonel von Welden in his topography of Monte Rosa.

Irrespective of the passes which lead from Gressoney to the E.—already described—and those leading westward, described in Rte. 125, there are many interesting excursions to be made, and travellers do unwisely who merely hurry through without seeing as much of the neighbouring mountains as weather and strength will permit. The most interesting excursion in fine weather is that to the

*Lys Glacier*. There is a good paved mule-path as far as *Növersch*, where Herr Zumstein resided. Beyond this (about 1½ hr. from St. Jean) is the large hamlet of *Gressoney la Trinité* (H. du Lyskamm). Next is *San Giacomo*, from whence a path to the Col d'Ollen ascends on the rt., and that to the Betta Furca on the l. (see Rte. 125). The last hamlet is *San Pietro*, and beyond it, at a spot called *Am Bett*, is a large house belonging to Baron Pecchio, a native of this valley, who, after having acquired a fortune and title in Germany, returned to his birthplace, and here indulged in the passion for chamois-hunting. He had several chalets on the neighbouring mountains, one at Salzen, close to the E. bank of the Lys Glacier, and a house at St. Jean, where he kept a collection of trophies of the chase, including some unusually fine bouquetins' heads. The chalets of Cour de Lys offer beds, but since the erection of the *Inn* on the Col d'Ollen are less used for glacier expeditions. They still, however, are the best starting-point for the Felikjoch (Rte. 127). The Lys Glacier is more easily approached on the E. than the W. side, where the moraine is extremely high and steep. It is well worth while to ascend on the E. by the

lateral moraine until the less crevassed part is reached, and then from the base of the Hohes Licht to advance over the glacier towards the foot (11,155 ft.) of the *Nase*, a conspicuous promontory terminating the S. buttress of the Lyskamm, and standing out in the midst of the glacier, which falls in magnificent ice-cascades on either side of it. Practised mountaineers may cross the glacier, and descend the steep moraine on the W. side: not less than 10 hrs. should be allowed for the excursion. On the E. side of the glacier, and below the Vincent-Pyramide, is the *Hohes Licht*, a rounded prominence, where at one time a gold-mine was worked at more than 10,800 ft. above the sea. A hut was constructed near the mine, which served Zumstein and other explorers of Monte Rosa as a sleeping-place. Another hut was subsequently built about 600 ft. lower, on the ridge descending from the Vincent-Pyramide, close to the summit of the *Col delle Piscie*. The brothers Schlagintweit remained there for 14 days in 1851 engaged in scientific observations. The height of this hut, called *Vincenthütte*, is 10,374 ft. One of the finest panoramic views in the neighbourhood of Gressoney is that from the summit of the *Grauhaupt*, 10,703 Eng. ft. in height, rising precipitously on the W. side of the Val de Lys.

"No one should, if possible, leave Gressoney without ascending it, if the weather be favourable. It is a difficult excursion for ladies, at least to the very top, though one was of our party. The view from the summit is a superb panorama, and may certainly count amongst the finest in the Alps. After ascending the Val de Lys for 35 min., a steep path by the side of a waterfall on the l. leads up to a cluster of chalets and some luxuriant pasturages; it is well to start early, so as to get over this part before the sun appears above the mountains on the E. side of the valley. Thence the ascent is more easy, over the side of the hill, rich with rhododendrons and mosses, till vegetation disappears, and

the path mounts by the side of a stream to the *Col de Pinta* (3 hrs. from Gressoney), a wild and desolate depression in the ridge, strewn with large rocks, where, as well as at the summit, there is a pyramid of stones, a 'homme de pierre' as the guides call it. Here the mule-path ends, and, if ladies are not strong enough to mount further, they will be amply compensated by the prospect from this point. The higher part of the mountain itself intercepts the view of the Monte Rosa chain, but the whole range from the Grand Combin to the Grand Paradis in the chain on the S. of the Val d'Aosta is seen, Mont Blanc rearing its huge amphitheatre of ice high above its neighbours. Beyond this the way—not path, for there is none—lies over loose shingle and shale; several large rocks have to be either circumvented or climbed, and the incline, just beyond the col, is very steep: afterwards it lies over firmer stones, the footing on which is more secure; 5 or 10 min. before reaching the summit there is a very stiff climb of 20 or 30 ft. of steep rock, and in less than 2 hrs. from the Pinta the top is reached, where we remained an hour. A perfect circle of mountains here rewards the trouble of the ascent: Monte Rosa, the Lyskamm, and the majestic Matterhorn appear quite close; Mont Blanc, farther away to the W., easily proves himself to be the 'Monarch of Mountains,' at least in height. The Grivola, the Grand Paradis, and all the ridge N. of Turin, are in the middle distance; whilst the Maritime Alps which bound the Riviera from Nice to Genoa, with Monte Viso conspicuously great on the one side, and the Tyrolean Alps on the other, form a splendid background to this glorious panorama.

"The col is a convenient place, after descending from the actual summit, for the mid-day déjeuner: provisions, however, must be taken, as nothing but very excellent milk can be obtained at the high chalets."

The time, exclusive of stoppages, is:—Ascent 5 hrs., descent 3½.

Those who do not feel confident of their strength will do much better to attempt some easier summit, rather than stop short in the ascent of the Grauhaupt at the Col de Pinta. Such a point is the *Pointe de Combetta*, S. of the Col de Ranzola (Rte. 125). Another summit, less difficult than the Grauhaupt, but more laborious than the Combetta, is the

*Telchenhorn*, whose top is seen exactly in the back-ground of the valley from the bridge of Gressoney. It is, in fact, a prolongation of the ridge of the Hohes Licht.

"It is a walk of 2½ hrs. to reach its foot, passing the paths leading to the Col d'Ollen on the rt., and Betta Furca on the l. A severe scramble of 2 hrs. brought us to the summit, over short prickly grass, affording no hold. The near view of the Lyskamm and glacier and Vincent-Pyramide is very grand. The Hohes Licht, which is the only intervening mountain, would probably command still grander views, but we had no time to ascend it. Between the Grauhaupt and Betta Furca pass there is a fine view of the Grivola and Mont Emilius. The height of the Telchenhorn is apparently about the same as that of the Col d'Ollen."

It would be quite possible to combine the ascent of the Telchenhorn with an excursion on the Lys Glacier in one long day's walk.

The *Bec de Frutière* (10,800 ft.), commands, probably, the most complete and beautiful panorama of any of the peaks near Gressoney. It is reached through a glen opening into the Lysthal about an hour below Le Trinité. It is possible to descend directly to Issime.

From Gressoney it is a walk of about 18 m. (6 hrs.) to descend the Val de Lys, or *Vallesee* as the Italian portion of the valley is called, to Pont St. Martin in the Val d'Aosta, passing many villages and hamlets, of which the principal are *Gaby*, *Issime*, *Fontainemore*, and *Lillimes*, through wild and imposing rock scenery, combined with the richest vegetation in a manner characteristic of the Val d'Aosta and its lateral valleys. At Issime, half-

way, lunch may be had at the village inn. The ch. contains some frescoes. Outside it, on the village green, the magistrate's chair is still preserved. About Trina the valley is strewn with huge rolled blocks or boulders. As you approach the Ponte di Trinità the scene becomes sterner, the precipices more shattered, with long shoots of débris and detached rocks. Below Issime an unbroken and beautiful wood of sweet chestnut stretches across the valley. The final descent to Pont St. Martin is full of Italian loveliness. The Vallesee loses in interest to those who ascend it.

At Pont St. Martin (Rte. 134) are pretty good *Inns*, Mont Rose, La Rosa Rossa.

The glacier passes of the *Lysjoch*, 14,200 ft., the *Felikjoch*, and the *Schwarzthor*, 13,400 ft., to the Riffel and Zermatt, are noticed in Rte. 127. For passes to the Biellese, see next Rte. For passes to the W., Rte. 125.

## ROUTE 124.

BIELLA TO GRESSONEY ST. JEAN, BY  
OROPA OR VAL ANDORNO.

*Biella* (*Inns*: Testa Grigia, best, good; many others), connected by a branch line with the Turin-Milan railroad, see *Handbook for N. Italy*, is a prosperous Italian country town situated at the foot of the Alps, whose first spurs rise above it in richly-wooded and thickly-populated slopes. It is divided into an upper and lower town. The streets are arcaded. There are few edifices of interest to the traveller. The cathedral is of the 15th century; the baptistery is older. The Church of San Sebastian contains pictures ascribed to B. Luini and G. Ferrari, but offers little remarkable to detain the traveller. The Italian Alpine Club has rooms, 8, Via dell' Ospedale, where strangers can see maps, &c. Besso has done some good mountain photographs. Its environs are cele-

brated in N. Italy for their natural beauty and salubrity, which have caused them to be studded with villas, and also for their iron manufactories. Three frequented pilgrimage-shrines lie within a short drive of the city; there are also several large hydropathic establishments. Two of the shrines lie on the paths which lead through the hills to the Val de Lys, and are described in their place. The third, the *Sanctuario di Graglia*, lies more to the W., and is reached from the town in 3 hrs. (two-horse carriage there and back, 18 francs) by a pleasant road. The sanctuary consists of a church, and a building in which visitors are lodged gratuitously for 9 days. It commands a noble view of the plain and the S.W. Alps. Paths connect it directly with Ivrea, 2½ hrs., and the Sanctuary of Oropa.

[The traveller proceeding towards the Italian lakes may drive to *Borgo Sesia* (20 m.) and Varallo or Orta by a charming country road, passing through many country towns, and descending Val Strona to the Sesia.

The road to *Ivrea* (4 hrs.) traverses the vast moraine (La Serra) of the ancient glacier of Val d'Aosta. It is said to be hot, and not particularly interesting, except to geologists. Pedestrians will prefer to drive to Graglia, and walk thence to Ivrea.]

*a. Gressoney by Oropa.*

It is a beautiful drive of about 2 hrs. (carriage 10 fr.) from Biella to the Sanctuary of Oropa. The road ascends constantly between high hedgerows, past numerous villages, and through delicious chestnut forests, commanding a noble prospect over the plain and the surrounding hills.

About 3 m. from Biella, at *Cossila*, is a hydropathic establishment. English visitors would mostly prefer the situation of the large establishment 15 min. short of the Sanctuary, well kept (pension 10 fr. a day), and beautifully situated at a height of 3500 ft.

The *Sanctuary of Oropa* is a most imposing pile of buildings ranged round two quadrangles. The lower quadrangle, open to the S. and ap-  
[Switz.]

proached by an avenue, is divided from the second by a range of buildings raised on an open arcade. The church, which contains the black female figure venerated as a representation of the Virgin by St. Luke, is small. The visitor will remark the usual crowd of votive tablets, and will, perhaps, note with surprise the use of photography in these offerings. The hospice can lodge 2000 guests, who are received gratuitously for 9 days, but must obtain their food at one of the excellent restaurants in the outer court. The pilgrims are reckoned at 70,000 to 80,000 annually, and as the spot is "sanissimo" as well as "santissimo," it may be believed that most of them derive benefit from their stay. The rooms provided are clean, and decently furnished.

To the W. of the Ospizio are a series of chapels, closely resembling those at Varallo, containing life-size figures representing incidents in the history of the Virgin. The Marriage at Cana is noteworthy.

[There are easy paths to the rival Sanctuaries of Graglia (2½ hrs.) and San Giovanni in Val Andorno (2 hrs.). The latter crosses a low pass.]

The route from the Hospice to Val de Lys by the *Col della Croce Grande* is easy, but very puzzling to find, and travellers will do well to hire a guide to the top. At an Alp ½ an hour from Oropa, the track turns up a steep hillside. Leaving to the rt. a higher alp and the apparent pass, the Alp della Strada is reached. The path now bends eastwards, and reaches a false col, near which several crosses mark the spot where a "tourmente" overtook some unfortunate peasants. 15 min. further a chapel marks the crest (2 to 2½ hrs.). The pass (7355 ft.) commands little distant view, but an ascent of 15 min. to the rocky point E. of it is rewarded by a panorama including the Monte Rosa chain, the Matterhorn, Mont Blanc, the Grandes Jorasses, the Graian Alps, and Monte Viso. The *Mont Mars*, W. of the pass, commands a more complete panorama, but is somewhat distant and rugged.

The descent into the Val de Lys is long. The path is in places a carefully-made staircase among huge blocks. Several lakes are passed. Below the last, near the Alp Vargno, the traveller is tempted by an excellent track running along the shady side of the valley; if bound for Gressoney he must be careful to leave it when above the opening of the valley it trends to the W. It is easy at this point to join the true path on the rt. bank of the torrent, and by bearing constantly to the rt. to reach the route of Val de Lys at the Ponte di Gramolla half an hour below Issime. The final descent into the richly-forested valley is of exquisite beauty; 6 hrs. will suffice a good walker from Oropa to Issime (See Rte. 123).

#### b. By Val Andorno.

A good carriage-road extends from Biella to Piedicavallo, a drive of 3 hrs. The inhabitants of Val Andorno emigrate largely as contractors and master-masons, and often return to build "palazzi" in their native valley, which has thus been filled with handsome edifices.

*Andorno*, half an hour from Biella, has a hydropathic establishment. The scenery is bright and varied. In two hours *Campiglia* is reached, the chief village of the upper valley.

[Here a road branches to the *Sanctuary of San Giovanni*. The ascent is through a beech-wood. The situation is charming. Rooms are given gratuitously for 9 days (as at Oropa and Graglia) to visitors, and there are good restaurants. It is a short 2 hours' walk hence to Oropa.]

The scenery becomes more severe as the road approaches the bend of the valley and *Piedicavallo* (Albergo delle Mologne, fair).

From this place, or the neighbouring village of Montasinerio, the ascent of the *Cima di Bo* (8215 ft.) may be made in 4 to 4½ hrs. It commands a vast and varied panorama of the Alps and plains, which has been engraved by the Italian Alpine Club.

The traveller proceeding to Val de Lys has the choice of two passes,

known as the *Col della Mologna Grande* and *Piccola*. The latter is the shortest (6 hrs. to Gressoney St. Jean): it is steep on the S. side, and only practicable for pedestrians. The pass commands little view. A mule-road is projected throughout. At present mules must be ordered beforehand from Gressoney to the Alp Piquet on the N. side by those who fear the walk.

The *Col della Mologna Grande* is 2 hrs. longer, but enables the traveller to reach and enjoy the view from the neighbouring *Punta dei Tre Vescovi*. The descent lies past the Alps of Ober and Unterloo, and the path reaches the valley at the hamlet of Lomatta.

From the top of the pass tracks leading to Val Sesia by the glens of the Vogna or the Sorba, may be taken by a pedestrian.

N.B. Travellers in this region should provide themselves with the S.W. sheet of the Alp. Club Map, and the excellent local guide book '*Guida nel Biellese*,' published at Biella.

### ROUTE 125.

GRESSONEY TO CHATILLON, BY THE COL DE RANZOLA, BY THE BETTA FURCA, OR BY THE BETTLINER PASS.

The three valleys of Anzasca, Sesia, and Lys, described in Rtes. 119, 120, and 123, diverge from Monte Rosa like the spokes of a wheel from the axle, and therefore the shortest passage from one to the other is that nearest to the central mountain. The two valleys which succeed the Val de Lys to the westward—the valleys of Challant and Tournanche—are nearly parallel to it and to each other, and they all three open out into the Val d'Aosta, which is the main depression parallel to the ridge of the Pennine Alps. The range separating the Val de Lys from the Val Challant may be passed at many points, but the two frequented passes are the Col de Ranzola and the Betta Furca. The former is by far the easier, and is

besides considerably the shorter route to Châtillon or Aosta.

a. To reach the *Col de Ranzola*, it is necessary to ascend the steep forest paths and slopes of the mountain on the side of the valley opposite to the *Col de Val Dobbia*; it is a rather fatiguing mule-path the whole way to the summit of the ridge which divides the valleys of the Lys and Challant.

On emerging in the ascent from the pine-forest, a grand view of Monte Rosa and the Lyskamm is presented, with the beautiful *Val de Lys* lying far below the traveller, with its quiet villages and fertile pasturages. The Lys, like a silver thread, may be traced up to its glaciers. On either side of the valley the vast mountains, belted with forests, offer, at the depression of their ridges, the paths by which the most frequent intercourse takes place with the neighbouring valleys. From a grass-covered peak rising S., and about 700 ft. above the pass, called *Pointe de Combettu*, one of the finest panoramic views of Monte Rosa and the Val d'Aosta and the Val de Gressoney may be obtained. This point can be reached in 1 hr. from the col, and in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  or 3 hrs. from Gressoney.

At the top of the pass Monte Rosa is shut out, but in clear weather the traveller is recompensed by a distant view of Mont Blanc. After passing the *Col de Ranzola* (7136 ft.) the descent is gradual to the little hamlet of St. Grat, then somewhat steep, the latter part of the way along a mountain of serpentine, to Brusson. The *Val Challant* may be traced in its course to Verrex, where it joins the Val d'Aosta, in which the Doire may be distinctly seen, flashing across like a streak of light, broken by the dark mass of the Castle of Verrex, which stands at the very junction of the two valleys, while under the feet, or not far off, is perched upon the declivity the picturesque Castle of Challant. In 4 hrs. from Gressoney the traveller reaches

Brusson (Inns: Lion d'Or, fair; Aigle), a beautifully situated village.

From hence the *Val Challant* may be descended to Verrex in the Val d'Aosta, about 3 hrs.' walk, which will be found very hot by those coming from the highland valleys. The scenery is beautiful, but the inhabitants are afflicted with goitre and cretinism to a painful extent. Above Brusson the valley changes its character and its name, being called *Val d'Ayas* from the name of the chief village. The most direct and agreeable route to Châtillon and Aosta is by the

*Col de Jon*. To reach it the bridle-path, after crossing some meadows beyond Brusson, winds steeply up through a forest of pines and larches, and by a glade between the trees to one of the most beautiful pasturages in the Alps—the *Col de Jon*, which is a fine greensward, broad and luxuriant. This is not a pass over a depression in a mountain range, such as are common in the Alps, but merely a short cut gained by crossing the shoulder of a mountain, instead of winding round its base. The *Mont Zerbion* is the southern extremity of the range separating the Val d'Ayas from the Val Tournanche, and it is over the side of this mountain that the track lies.

On reaching the descent towards the Val d'Aosta, near a little chapel of St. Grat, this charming valley is seen in all its length, from Châtillon to Mont Blanc; not traced quite to the base of the latter, for its summit only is seen on the rt. peering into the Val d'Aosta, over several compact lines of mountains. The prospect of the Val d'Aosta itself is of extraordinary beauty; its innumerable meadows, margined by thick woods, which creep up the water-channelled dells at the foot of the mountains—the shadowy forms of the Cogne Alps—the castle of Ussel on its rock, of Fenis overlooking its sea of wood, with numerous white ch. towers and spires—Aosta and its plain, and the winding flashes of the Doire undulating or sweeping across the vale—combine to form a view which will long haunt the memory. A series of steep tourniquets down a water-worn channel brings the traveller to the

forests of chestnut and walnut, for which the Val d'Aosta is celebrated. These offer to him their shade, and soon the vines add their luxuriant foliage to the cool and refreshing path which leads past the mineral spring to the village and Baths of St. Vincent (2½ hrs. from Brusson). The valley of Aosta is entered at one of its finest points near

ST. VINCENT (Rte. 134) (*Inns*: Ecu de France, and Lion d'Or, fair), less than 2 m. from

CRATILLON (Rte. 134).

N. of the Grauhaupt are the following peaks and passes between the valleys of Gressoney and Ayas:—*Rothhorn Pass*, *Bethhorn*, *Betta Furca Pass*, *Bettlinerhorn*, *Bettliner Pass*. Just S. of the Grauhaupt is the *Col de Pinta* or *Cunca*. Of these passes

*b.* The *Betta Furca* is the easiest between the upper end of the Val de Lys and the Val d'Ayas. It is not in itself very interesting, and unless taken on the way between Gressoney and Zermatt, or unless the traveller wishes to explore the glaciers at the head of the Val d'Ayas, there is little to recommend it. It is quite practicable for mules. A good track leads from Gressoney through Noversch for 2½ hrs., then turns to the l. and ascends rapidly for 1 hr. to a small oratory, with a beautiful view of the Lyskamm and its glacier: another good hour of gentle ascent brings the traveller to the col (8639 ft.), on which is a wooden cross. Half an hour on the descent are the chalets of *Reugel*, where the accommodation is wretched. Further down are the chalets of *Susselle*, where tolerable sleeping quarters are to be found, "chez l'Enfant." The very poor village of *San Giacomo d'Ayas* is next reached, and near it at a place called Fiéry, an *Inn*, with fair accommodation, 7 hrs. from Gressoney.

The *Bettliner Pass*, N. of the *Betta Furca*, crosses the mountains close to the glaciers, and is a finer but longer passage. From the head of the Lys-thal a mule-path leads in 3 hrs. to the

col, which is S. of the *Felikhorn* and *Zwillinge*. On the descent the track passes between the Klein-Verra Glacier on the rt. and the *Mont Rouge* l., and then down the Combe de Verra to the *Inn* at Fiéry. From S. Giacomo the path down the Val d'Ayas follows the stream Evanson, or *Torrent Blanche*, to *Ayas*, and a little further joins the track from Brusson over the Col de Jon. Distance—about 7 hrs. from Gressoney to San Giacomo; 2½ hrs. from San Giacomo to Brusson.

From Fiéry the traveller may cross to Val Tournanche by a pass near the Grand Tournalin.

From the head of the Val d'Ayas is the pass of the *Cimes Blanches* (Rte. 128), either across the mountain to Breuil, or to Zermatt by the St. Théodule, the paths diverging at the chalets of *Aventina*, about half-way to the col. Time to Breuil about 7 hrs.—to Zermatt about 9.

The mountaineer has a choice of two fine passes, the Schwarz Thor and *Felik Joch*, to Zermatt (Rte. 127).

## ROUTE 126.

### VISP TO ZERMATT.

| Visp.                              |               | Hrs. | Mins. |
|------------------------------------|---------------|------|-------|
| Stalden                            | { (mule-path) | 1    | 30    |
| St. Niklaus                        |               | 2    | 15    |
| St. Niklaus to Zermatt (char road) |               | 2    | 30    |

The concourse of travellers to the valleys round Monte Rosa\* is every year increasing, and the accommodation has kept pace with the influx of strangers. Zermatt, however, is still inaccessible on wheels, and it is a further and inevitable disadvantage to its situation in the eyes of many that there is no second way out except by glacier passes, which every one is not hardy enough to attempt. The St. Théodule, however, is in no way

\* The late Wm. Brockedon, author of 'Passes of the Alps,' was perhaps the first who drew the attention of English travellers to Zermatt and Monte Rosa. The fame of their unrivalled scenery has since been extended by Professor Forbes's 'Alps of Savoy,' and by the works of members of the Alpine Club.

difficult, and is passable from July to the middle of October.

The only bridle-road to Zermatt is from *Visp* (Rte. 56), where horses can be obtained. There is a good mule-path to St. Niklaus, and from that point to Zermatt a char-road. It is only owing to the narrow and jealous spirit shown by the commune of *Visp* that a carriage-road has not long ago been made all the way. A riding-horse from *Visp* costs to *Stalden* 5 fr., *St. Niklaus* 10 (12 if obliged to stop the night), *Zermatt* 22; a carriage from *St. Niklaus* to *Zermatt* 15 fr.; porters by the day 5 fr. These are the charges authorised by tariff, and include back fare; 11 hrs., including 2 hrs.' halt at *St. Niklaus*, should be allowed for the ride on horseback to or from *Zermatt*; 6½ hrs. (without the halt) if a carriage be taken from *St. Niklaus*.

[There is a delightful route to *Zermatt* up the *Val d'Anniviers*, thence to *Zmeiden* in the *Turtman Thal*, and thence over the mountains to *St. Niklaus* (Rte. 129).]

A grand alpine valley leads to *Zermatt*, and the interest is kept up by occasional glimpses of the peaks and glaciers which enclose it. This valley suffered terribly from the earthquake in 1855; precipices were shaken down, chalets overwhelmed, and the road, which had just been made, destroyed in many places.

The road on leaving *Visp* enters a hot and sandy valley, where the hills are covered with vines and rich in wild flowers, the rosy-fruited barberry, and other bushes. In front is seen the snowy *Balferin*, 12,402 ft., the extreme N. peak of the *Saasgrat*, and beyond *Stalden* the *Brueggghorn*, 12,618 ft., a peak N. of the *Weiss-horn*, often mistaken for that mountain.

The traveller crosses the *Visp* at the picturesque, and now ancient

*Neubrücke*, where the trout which rush down to the *Rhone* when the glaciers melt are caught in quantities. Fine view from this bridge of the fork of the valley.

5 m. *Stalden* (2722 ft.) (*Inn*: *Traube*,

new). *B. Venetz*, *J. Petrus*, and *Lorenz Noti* are good guides. This village is prettily situated on the hill-side, at the junction of the *Gorner Visp* and *Saaser Visp*. E. of it, across the mountains, the *Bistenen Pass* leads to the *Hospice* on the *Simplon* (Rte. 56). The path to *Zermatt* ascends the l. bank of the *Gorner Visp*, and enters the *Nicolai-Thal*. It is steep for a few minutes, and soon afterwards, passing round a recess, reaches a projecting point, where, in Aug. 1868, Prof. *Airy*, with a party of ladies, had a very narrow escape from destruction. Their cavalcade happened to be led by a baggage-horse, which in a moment was dashed down the slope and over the cliff by a falling stone. The road then descends to a bridge. [Hence a short cut to the *Saasthal* by a water channel round the shoulder of the mountain.] It then rises and again crosses the *Visp* before reaching

7 m. *St. Niklaus* (1820 ft.) (*Inn*: *Grand H. St. Nicolas*, a large and comfortable house, with 56 bedrooms), a good resting place half-way to *Zermatt*. Some first-rate glacier guides (*P. Knubel*, *A. Pollinger*, *J. Imboden*, *J. Moser*, *I. I. Truffer*, &c.) live here, but in summer are generally at *Zermatt*. *P. Taugwalder* (son), *J. Lengen*, *J. Lauber*, *J. Taugwalder*, and *Aloys Brauntschen*, are also men of some experience in ice-work. This village was much injured by the earthquake in 1855; it is the chief place in the valley, charmingly situated amidst wild Alpine scenery, tempered with forests and orchards in the foreground. Its ch. tower with shining cupola is a conspicuous land-mark. Here begins the carriage-road to *Zermatt*, distant 12½ m., a drive of 2½ hrs. Chars to be had at the inn.

[*W.* is the *Augstbord Pass* (Rte. 129) to *Zmeiden* in the *Turtman-Thal*, and the ascent, as far as the *Jung Chapel*, is a charming excursion from *St. Niklaus*. It is very steep, but can be made in 2 hrs.' riding; the object being the magnificent view of the *Mischabel* peaks, of the *Weisshorn*, and the long vista of the *Zermatt* valley, terminated by the *Lyskamm* and *Breithorn*.]

At St. Niklaus the valley expands, rising E. in green broken ground to the heights under the Balferin, but beyond the village it again contracts and is shut in on the W. by precipices. In these there are dark steep openings through which rush waterfalls. The road beyond St. Niklaus crosses the torrent, and passes near numerous blocks as large as chalets which were shaken down by the earthquake. It traverses in turn meadow and forest, and soon opens in front the snows of the Breithorn and the Little Mont Cervin. Nothing can be seen of the *Mischabel* beneath which the valley passes, but at *Herbrigen*, half-way to Randa, the traveller obtains a peep of the *Brunegghorn* and *Weisshorn*.

6 m. *Randa* (4750 ft.). (*Inn*: H. *Weisshorn*, good), situated on a hill above the road, among meadows, and opposite a gap in the precipice walling in the valley on the W., through which the *Bies Glacier* descends from the *Weisshorn*. The view of this glacier and the *Brunegghorn* is fine. Its cliffs projected against the sky, overhang an ice-fall so steep that it seems marvellous they can be held in position by the force of cohesion. At times, indeed, aided by warm winds, gravity has overcome this resistance, and precipitated masses into the valley. Such a catastrophe occurred in 1636, and again in 1849, Dec. 27, when a considerable portion of the glacier suddenly detached itself, and fell from a height of 1500 ft. It passed clear of the village of Randa, but the mere draft of air produced by a fall from such an elevation overthrew the houses, scattering the timbers of which they were built like straws to the distance of a mile, and hurling rocks many fathoms uphill.

[The passage to Gröben over the head of this glacier by the *Biesjoch*, 11,645 ft. above the sea, S.W. of the *Brunegghorn*, has been made in 12 hrs. (actual walking). The ascent by the rocks which overhang the N. bank of the *Bies Glacier* is difficult. On the *Turtman* side of the col is an ice-wall, but otherwise the descent on the rt. of the *Turtman Glacier* is easy.]

[E. of Randa is the *Festi Glacier*, which comes down from the *Grobenhorn* or *Dom*, the highest point of the *Mischabelhörner*, 14,935 ft. above the sea. This splendid peak, rising 10,000 ft. above Randa, was first ascended in 1858 by the Rev. J. L. Davies; starting before daylight, he reached the summit in 9 hrs., and descended in 5, returning to Zermatt in the evening. Unless travellers bivouac out on the mountain side it is a *very* long, although not difficult expedition. The panorama is one of the finest in the Alps. Its brother peak, the *Täschhorn* is, from the W., a climb of similar character. Both these peaks have been climbed also by their S. and N. ridges and directly from Saas by hardy mountaineers.

Randa is also the starting-point for the ascent of the *Weisshorn* (14,804 ft.). For this it is necessary to sleep at a new hut built at a spot called the *Höhlicht*, 3 hrs. from Randa.

The *Weisshorn*, 14,804 ft.—so named from its glittering garb of snow,—one of the most splendid objects in the Alps, seen admirably by travellers descending the upper valley of the Rhone—had been long deemed inaccessible until ascended in 1861 by Prof. Tyndall. It is a pyramid, of which the 3 edges or arêtes descend N., S., and E. The N. fork encloses the head of the *Turtman Glacier*, the N. and E. the steep *Bies Glacier*, the E. and S. the *Schallenberg Glacier*. It was from the last that Prof. Tyndall, accompanied by his famous guide, J. Bennen, and by an Oberland guide, named Ulrich Wenger, started from a height of 9000 ft. at daylight on the 19th of August. They gained the E. arête by a couloir—conspicuous in the view from the Riffel—but found the crest to consist of a most formidable line of towers and crags, which had either to be climbed over or circumvented. At one point, for a little distance, it was a mere wall of snow, and the passage from the couloir to the summit occupied 8 hrs. The descent was made to the *Schallenberg Glacier* by another rte.. Randa was reached at 11 P.M., after 19 hrs. of severe exer-



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tion. From the Schallenberg Alp the top has since been reached in 6½ hrs.; and in 1871 two ascents were made by the N.E. face and N. arête in 9 hrs., from a bivouac on the *Kistel*, a rock 3 hrs. above Randa.]

Beyond Randa the valley is more level and pastoral. In about 1 hr. the road reaches

2½ m. *Täsch*, at the foot of the *Täsch* Alp and the passes of *Alphubel* and *Allalwin* (Rte. 121) to Saas and the Mattmark-See. From *Täsch* the traveller ascends, passing broken forest ground, and to the rt. a romantic bridge, on the old mule-path, and then between the ragged pines obtains his first view of the *Matterhorn*, distinguished from all other peaks by its strange solitary pyramid. The road crosses the *Visp* for the last time by the substantial *Spissbrücke*. The mule-track went high up on the mountain, but a char-road has been cut out of the rocks, following the course of the stream. The road then enters the green and glacier-headed valley of Zermatt.

4 m. ZERMATT, see next Route.

## ROUTE 127.

### EXCURSIONS, ASCENTS, AND PASSES FROM ZERMATT.

ZERMATT (Piedmontese, *Prabugn*).  
*Hotels*: Monte Rosa, enlarged in 1868; Mont Cervin; both kept by M. Seiler, who rents and manages the *Inn* on the Riffelberg. A large new inn has been built by the Commune. It is not yet open (1878). In 1879 the Riffel Hotel, now leased by M. Seiler, reverts to the commune. M. Seiler is building a large new house half an hour lower down. H. des Alpes, proprietor and landlord Ignatz Biener, cheap. Biener is a guide and botanist, well acquainted with the habitat of the rarer plants. H. de la Poste, small. In August and September the hotels are often full, and it is advisable to telegraph for rooms. This retired village, of 450 inhab., 5315 ft.

above the sea, consisting of about 60 quaint old black wooden houses, with the white inns towering above them, stands on a little plain at the head of the valley of the *Visp*, encircled by the most important group of mountains in central Europe.

Mont Blanc can boast of his circle of *aiguilles*, but Monte Rosa has a far greater number of attendant summits. Only one of these is conspicuous from the village. That one, however, is the unique *Matterhorn* (French, *Mont Cervin*, German, *Matterhorn*, Ital. *Monte Silvio*), a natural obelisk rising in singular and solitary magnificence 14,705 ft. above the sea, and nearly 5000 ft. above the glacier plateau which forms its pedestal. Seen by day it is a noble object, but by night, "among the gleaming stars, mysterious, self-luminous, like a beautiful but fearful phantom, folded impenetrably in its spangled robe."—*Hüschli*. The *Mischabelhörner* are in view, but are singularly ineffective.

Three glaciers stream down towards the head of the Zermatt Valley, and contribute to the torrent which rushes past the village—the *Gorner Glacier* from Monte Rosa, the *Findelen* from the *Strahlhorn* on the E., the *Zmutt Glacier* from the *Matterhorn*, *Dent d'Hérens*, and *Dent Blanche* on the W.

Here the sketcher may find ample employment, and the mineralogist, botanist, and entomologist collect rich harvests. The pine-woods are beautiful—particularly in the *Zmutt* valley—and the "flora" is exceptionally rich and varied. The pasturage appears good, but the attempts to raise grain crops in this cold and shady valley are melancholy, and only serve to show the perseverance of its inhabitants. The bread, butter, meat, poultry, &c., for the tourists are all supplied from Geneva, and come to a great extent from France.

The *Excursions* from Zermatt are very numerous, and no adequate knowledge of the locality can be gained in less than a week. For those who are pressed for time, and not mountaineers, the *Gorner Grat* and *Hörnli* are two of the best points of

view. Good glacier guides belonging to the place are Peter Perrn, J. Taugwald, Johann Kronig, J. Perrn, and Peter Taugwalder. Besides these the guides named at St. Niklaus, Saas, and Macugnaga (see *ante*), may generally be found here in the season. There is an authorised *Tariff* of charges:—

|                                 | Francs. |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Matterhorn . . . . .            | 100     |
| Weisshorn . . . . .             | 70      |
| Monte Rosa . . . . .            | 40      |
| Col d'Hérens . . . . .          | 25      |
| Tritt Pass . . . . .            | 30      |
| Adler Pass . . . . .            | 25      |
| New Weissthor . . . . .         | 25      |
| Matterhorn Hut . . . . .        | 25      |
| Cima di Jazzi . . . . .         | 12      |
| Theodule to Châtillon . . . . . | 20      |
| " " Breuil . . . . .            | 15      |
| " " col and back . . . . .      | 8       |
| Hörnli and Schwarze . . . . .   | 6       |
| Mettelhorn . . . . .            | 8       |

Guides by the day, for ordinary excursions, 6 fr. and 1 fr. Trinkgeld; mules, by the day, 10 fr. and 1 fr. Trinkgeld.

In the ch.-yard of the old ch. are the graves of Messrs. Hudson and Hadow and Michel Croz of Chamonix, who lost their lives in the first ascent of the Matterhorn; as well as those of other victims of more recent catastrophes. An English ch. has been built as a memorial to the victims of the Matterhorn.

#### A. EXCURSIONS.

The *Riffel* and *Gornergrat*, the *Schwarz See* and *Zmutt Gletscher*, *Hörnli*, the *Mettelhorn*, the *Rothhorn*.

a. *Riffelberg* and *Gorner Grät*.—The first excursion from Zermatt is up the *Riffelberg*, and to the *Gorner Grät*, and those who have time but for one expedition usually choose this. From Zermatt to the inn on the *Riffelberg* is 2½ hrs. on horses, 2 hrs. good walking. From the inn to the top of the *Gorner Grät* 1½ hr.

The *Riffelberg* is properly a long rocky ridge extending between the *Gorner Glacier* and the *Findelen Glacier*; but the portion of it near the inn, and overhanging Zermatt, is especially called by that name. The 3 principal summits, rising one higher

than the other from W. to E., are called the *Gorner Grät*, the *Hochthäli-grat*, and the *Stockhorn*. The *Riffelhorn* is a detached pinnacle of serpentine rising above the *Gorner Glacier*.

The *Hotel* on the *Riffelberg*, at an elevation of 8430 ft., is very conspicuous from Zermatt. There is no absolute occasion for a guide to the *Riffelberg* or to the *Gorner Grät*, but it is possible to miss the path. This goes past the ch. and on the l. bank of the *Visp* for about 10 min., when the stream is crossed. The path turns rt. at the chapel of *Winkelmatten*, crosses the stream from the *Findelen Glacier*, and then some meadows to the foot of the mountain. Here the ascent begins. It is exceedingly steep in places, through a forest—first of larch, then of *Arolla* (*Arve*, *Pinus cembra*). The path then emerges on the open alp. Here a large new inn will be opened in 1880 by M. Seiler. Passing some chalets, the way turns to the rt. across a small stream. The rest of the ascent is by zigzags to the plateau where the comfortable and much frequented *Riffel Hotel* (*Eng. Ch. S.*) is situated. In the season it is often necessary to order rooms several days beforehand. From this point there is a noble view of the *Matterhorn* and the *Mischabel*, *Weisshorn*, *Rothhorn*, *Gabelhorn*, and *Dent Blanche*; of the *Zmutt Glacier* to the *Col d'Hérens*, and down the long *Zermatt Valley* to the *Bietschhorn*, one of the *Oberland Alps*. The top of the *Breithorn* is visible left of the *Riffelhorn*. Leaving the inn, and ascending S. over a moorland, the traveller soon reaches the edge of a steep descent to the *Gorner Glacier*, and obtains his first view of the splendid snows of *Monte Rosa* and the *Lyskamm* and the rocky face of the *Breithorn*, one of the most imposing spectacles in the Alps. Here rt. lies a little tarn, and above it the rugged rock of the *Riffelhorn*, which fair climbers may with caution ascend. Mr. Knyvett Wilson, when climbing it without a guide, having previously ascended it with one, fell and perished, July, 1865. The path





here turns to the l., and continues rising from one swelling wave to another over rougher ground. It is now better to dismount, and send the horses to meet you near the spot known as Guggli, but it is possible to ride to the summit. The track is soon over rocks with snow in the hollows, and vegetation becomes very scanty, and has almost disappeared when the summit of the Gorner Grat is reached, 10,290 ft. above the sea. This is a round knoll, perhaps 50 yds. across, with precipices towards the Gorner Glacier and a steep slope of snow on the N. It commands a splendid view of the Gorner Glacier, and of the ice-fields stretching 12 m. from the Cima di Jazzi to the Matterhorn, and also a complete panorama, nearly 40 m. in circumference, of snowy mountains. The view will naturally be compared to those from the Brevent and the *Æggischhorn*. As a panorama it exceeds anything at Chamonix, where the snow view is always confined to one side. The peaks that surround the Gorner Glacier are incomparably grander than those above the Aletsch. On the other hand, the Aletsch glacier itself has in size no rival in the Alps, and no Zermatt mountain emulates the proud and absolute pre-eminence of Mont Blanc. On the whole, however, there is no spot in the Alps so easily attainable which commands so fine a near view of a great snowy chain.

N.B. Travellers are cautioned not to throw stones down the S.W. face of the Gorner Grat, as by doing so they endanger the lives of mountaineers returning from the Gorner Glacier. The *Hochthäligrat*, on the E., is the only point which impedes a complete view. It is the continuation of the Riffelberg ridge, about 1½ hr. from the Gorner Grat; but the panorama from it differs little from that already obtained.

Descending from the Gorner Grat, and keeping rather towards the N. by a track not easy to find, in about ¾ hr. the eminence called *Guggli* is reached, the view from which is re-

markable, though it will perhaps appear tame after that from the Gorner Grat. The Bietschhorn on the N. side of the valley of the Rhone is here a conspicuous object.

From Guggli there is a path by the side of the Findelen Glacier back to Zermatt, but it is usual to return in about ¼ hr. over rough but level ground to the Riffel inn. The return may be varied by descending to the foot of the Gorner Glacier, where the river issuing from it may be visited. Here, a few years ago, one might literally touch the meadows with one hand, and the glacier with the other, but the ice is now in retreat. The torrent from the glacier soon plunges into a gorge of serpentine, the commencement of a romantic forest ravine, through which it leaps and struggles until it reaches the meadows of Zermatt. The descent from the glacier to Zermatt is about 45 minutes.

The Gorner Glacier encroached rapidly up to 1867. It has lately, like most other Swiss glaciers, retreated.

*b. Schwarzsee, Hörnli, and Zmutt Glacier.*—The path is the same as that to the Théodule for the first 45 min. (Rte. 128). The direct track strikes up the mountain to the rt. of the Gorner Glacier; and in about 45 min. reaches a wild and rocky alp. Hence the path is nearly level and easy, and the traveller can contemplate at his leisure Monte Rosa and the Gorner Glacier, or the amazing mountain overhead. Another 45 min. will bring him to the Schwarzsee, at the foot of the Hörnli, 2½ hrs. from Zermatt. Ladies can ride up all the way; but part of the ascent is very steep. The Schwarzsee is a little lake, 8393 ft. above the sea, with a lonely chapel beside it. There is nothing remarkable in the spot itself; but the low ridge east of it commands a superb view of the basin of Zermatt and surrounding mountains: in some respects finer than that from the Riffel. The Matterhorn, rising overhead, is the principal object; but the view also embraces the snow-fields and summits

of Monte Rosa, and the whole extent of the Gorner Glacier, to the Cima di Jazzi. A still finer view is obtained from the *Hörnli*, an hour's steep ascent, a small part of which is over moraine, and not easy to find without a guide. To turn the precipice overhanging the lake, it is necessary to walk two or three hundred yards towards the Zmutt Glacier, to a point where the shaly rocks slope down to the alp and are practicable. The *Hörnli*, 9492 ft. above the sea, abuts upon the foot of the N.E. arête of the Matterhorn. It is, in fact, the lowest step of that amazing staircase by which the summit of the peak was first reached. Either from the *Hörnli* or from the Schwarze-see, the traveller can return by a different route to Zermatt, descending westward to the foot of the great glacier of Zmutt, and thence along the S. side of the Zmutt valley. This route passes through a forest, and abounds in most singular and beautiful pictures. It is less steep, but longer than the other, and will take about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours. If on horseback, it will be necessary to cross to the N. side by a romantic bridge about half-way down the valley; those on foot can continue through the forest, to the end of it, by a narrow path (a little difficult at one place), which falls into that from the Théodule; but the best rte., and as beautiful, is that over the bridge. The Zmutt Glacier is remarkable, and, to tired travellers, detestable, on account of the number of stones which cover it. For a long distance hardly any ice is to be seen, but it is well worth a visit on account of its magnificent view of the Matterhorn (engraved in Mr. Ruskin's 'Modern Painters'). The two-roomed hut built on the *Stockie*, 4 hrs. from Zermatt, greatly facilitates its exploration, and those who spend a night there are rewarded in fine weather by the most sublime effects.

The ascent of the *Mettelhorn* (11,188 ft.), on the N. side of the Trift ravine, is one of the longest of the easy excursions from Zermatt, but also one of the most inviting. Horses cannot be used. It is best made by

following a narrow track, at first nearly due N. from Zermatt, then mounting by zigzags and bearing to the l. till the Trift Glacier comes into view. From thence a direct ascent, partly over snow, and very steep towards the top, leads to the summit, 11,188 ft., about 5 hrs. from Zermatt. The view is one of the most magnificent of easily accessible ice scenes. The gigantic cliffs of the Weisshorn rising beyond the Schallenberg Glacier are full in face to the W., the great Alpine range is on the S., the Saas-Grat on the E., and the Oberland Mountains grandly close the Zermatt Valley on the N. All the mountains seem to turn their most precipitous sides to the observer.

The *Unter-Mettelhorn* (seen from Zermatt) is a lower point, with a good view. The slanting path above the cornfields l. of the valley leads to the foot of it, and an exceedingly steep slope, covered with rhododendron and grass, to the rocky top.

The *Hohbalm*, a buttress of the Unter Gabelhorn S. of the Triftbach (about 8000 ft.), commands views of the Monte Rosa chain and Matterhorn, equal, and in some respects superior, to those from the Riffelberg. It is easy of access from Zermatt, but there is as yet no path. Ascent 3 hrs. A pleasant short walk may be taken along the Triftbach. Edelweiss grows here, with many other Alpine flowers.

c. The *Unter-Rothhorn*, N. of the Findelen - Thal (and accessible to ladies), may be ascended in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. by a mule-path. This crosses the bridge just E. of Zermatt, slopes l. up the mountain meadows and forest to a glen lying N. of the peak. The S. side, which is seen from Zermatt, is covered with rocks, and not easy to climb, but there is no difficulty on the N. side. The view is panoramic. The summit resembles an inverted basin, and nothing near can be seen from its central point. It is 10,191 ft. above the sea, surrounded by a circle of snow mountains, and in view of the 3 chief glacier routes leading out of the

valley of Zermatt, viz. the St. Théodule into Val d'Aosta, the Weisssthor into Val Anzasca, and the Col d'Hérens into Val d'Hérens. There is a short and steep descent into the Findelen-Thal by which a traveller can return. N. of the Unter-Rothhorn is the

*Ober-Rothhorn*, 11,214 ft., connected with the Rympfischhorn (to be distinguished from the far loftier *Rothhorn*, called also the *Moming*, 13,855 ft., on the opposite side of the Zermatt valley). The Ober-Rothhorn is within the reach of moderate climbers. Its ascent may be made from the *Stelli See* in the Findelen Thal, by mounting easy rocks to a col between the U. and O. Rothhorn, and then along the crest of the ridge; or from Zermatt by the Riederkummen Thal, whence the mountain can be attacked at several points. "The view is *sensational*, for although the slope you ascend is simple enough, the other side is a blank precipice, straight down to the ice-fields of the *Mischabel*, which are seen to perfection. The Ober-Rothhorn is in fact a peak of that grand circle of which the Rympfischhorn, Allaleinhorn, Alphubel, Täschhorn, and Dom are other points."—*T. G. S.*

#### B. ASCENTS.

*Alphubel*, *Allaleinhorn*, *Rympfischhorn*, *Strahlhorn*, *Cima di Jazzi*, *Monte Rosa*, *Lysskamm*, *Zwillinge*, *Breithorn*, *Matterhorn*, *Gabelhorn*, *Rothhorn*.

The ascents of the two *Grosse Mischalbellhörner* have been mentioned above (p. 358).

The *Alphubel* is easily reached in 1 hr. from the Alphubel Joch. It is possible to pass over it, and return to Zermatt by the route of the *Mischabel Joch* (Rte. 121).

The *Allaleinhorn* (13,235 ft.), reached in 2 hrs. from the Allalein Pass, is not a very attractive ascent.

The *Rympfischhorn* (13,790 ft.) may be ascended in 7 to 8 hrs. from Zermatt by the Rymfischwänge or ridge separating the Adler and Längenfluh glaciers. The ascent is not difficult for fair climbers.

The *Strahlhorn* (13,750 ft.) is

easily reached in 1 hr. from the Adler Pass. Owing to its position, it commands one of the finest views towards Italy in this district.

*Cima di Jazzi* (12,527 ft.), the highest point of the elevated plateau connecting Monte Rosa with the Saas-Grat. It can be reached in 5 hrs. from the Riffelberg Hotel when the snow is in good condition. On the state of the snow the fatigue of this excursion entirely depends. It is often accomplished by ladies. During the greater part of the time the path is over ice and snow on gentle slopes, and there are few other mountains in the Alps of such a height which can be so easily ascended. The view from the top extends over the Pennine chain, the Bernese Alps, and the plains and lakes of Italy, and to Tyrol. A rope is always wanted, and neutral-tinted spectacles and veils should be taken. Starting from the Riffelberg, the path leaves the little lake at the foot of the Riffelhorn, and passes nearly on a level along the very steep slope forming the southern face of the Gorner Grat, at first at a great height above the glacier, till the gradual rise of the ice brings its surface to a level with the path in about an hour after leaving the hotel. The glacier is then ascended for some distance, but the crevasses soon render it necessary to return to the rocks on the l. In about 2½ hrs. from the Riffel the traveller takes to the glacier again at the foot of the Stockhorn. From this point the track lies nearly in a straight line over easy slopes of snow. The final slopes are steeper, but not very long, and soon a point is reached where in two or three steps the scene is changed as if by enchantment. Instead of toiling over a snow-field, with no object visible save boundless fields of *névé* and occasional black rocks, the traveller finds himself on a summit of smooth snow, but close to a tremendous line of precipices, extending far to the S. along the face of Monte Rosa, and overhung by an icy cornice, from which he must be very careful to keep at a safe distance.

Looking downward, if the valley be clear, he sees the Macugnaga Glacier about 6000 ft. below, but apparently so near that he might think a stone flung from the hand would reach it. It, however, more commonly happens, even in fine weather, that a cloud hangs like a curtain between the valley and the spectator. Eddying to and fro some thousands of feet below him, he supposes it to fill the valley, while to the people of Macugnaga, it appears to cover the mountain-top. The descent is generally commenced on the steeper S. side, to enable the traveller to see the head of the Old Weisssthor Pass. He has then the option of retracing his steps to the Riffel, or of returning by the Findelen Glacier to Zermatt. The ascent of the Cima can be easily combined with the passage of the New Weisssthor.

*Monte Rosa.* The highest part of Monte Rosa consists of a range of 5 peaks running N. and S., the extremities of the range not being more than 2 m. apart. Commencing at the northern end, the names and heights are, according to the latest measurements—

|                           | Eng. ft. |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Nordend . . . . .         | 15,132   |
| Höchste Spitze . . . . .  | 15,217   |
| Zumstein-Spitze . . . . . | 15,004   |
| Signal-Kuppe . . . . .    | 14,964   |
| Parrot-Spitze . . . . .   | 14,577   |

On the S. side of the mountain are 4 more considerable peaks, making 9 in all, viz.—

|                            | Eng. ft. |
|----------------------------|----------|
| Ludwigshöhe . . . . .      | 14,229   |
| Schwarzhorn . . . . .      | 14,082   |
| Balmenhorn . . . . .       | 13,927   |
| Vincent-Pyramide . . . . . | 13,859   |

The *Nordend* was first ascended in 1855 by Sir T. and Mr. E. Buxton, and Mr. Cowell.

The *Höchste Spitze* was ascended in 1848 by two Swiss (Professor Ulrich's guides), and in 1851 by the Schlagintweits, by the arête connecting it with the Nordend, but the point reached, now known as the Ostspitze, was 20 ft. or more lower than the summit, which so obtained the name of the *Allerhöchste Spitze*. This was first climbed in 1855

by Messrs. Hudson, G. and C. Smyth, Birkbeck, and Stevenson, accompanied by Ulrich Lauener, of Lauterbrunnen, and 3 Zermatt guides, who reached it by the rte. which has been followed ever since. This, the highest peak of the mountain, is called *par excellence* Monte Rosa.

The *Zumstein-Spitze* was ascended from the S. side as early as 1820 by the intrepid explorer whose name it bears, but after several failures, in which the large party, which Zumstein considered necessary, sheltered by night in crevasses and suffered much from frost-bite. In 1860 Messrs. Leslie Stephen and Liveing gained the summit for the first time from the Riffel.

The *Signal-Kuppe* was reached in 1842 by M. Gnifetti, the *cure* of Alagna.

Since 1860, the ascent of Monte Rosa has become very common; for, though it is more difficult than that of Mont Blanc, yet, by starting from the Riffelberg, the expedition up and down may be accomplished in from 10 to 14 hrs., and there is no necessity for sleeping out on the mountain. Storms also seem less frequent than on Mont Blanc, and the fatal accidents have been much rarer. The traveller generally leaves the Riffel by starlight, crossing the Gorner Glacier when the rosy blushing mountains announce the presence of day. At the foot of Monte Rosa he reaches the rocks called *Auf der Platte*, and then, by a series of toilsome snow-slopes, winds his way to the final crest or *Kamm*. Just below it the névé is very steep, and here in July 1865, when there was much fresh snow, a fatal accident occurred to a party of English. An avalanche was started, and a porter was buried 6 feet deep. The crest has now to be ascended, and it is the difficulty of the mountain, On the S. it is a precipice of about 400 ft., on the N. an ice-slope so steep as to be almost equally dangerous. Between the two lies the edge or arête, inclined at a high angle, and formed partly of ice and partly of ice-cold rock. Great caution is here necessary; the advance is made step by step, but the rope should on no account be laid

aside (as suggested in a work of generally unimpeachable authority). At length a rock some 12 ft. high, which seems to bar the passage, is reached. The guide scrambles to the top, and by the aid of the rope the traveller follows. In another step he is on the *Allerhöchste Spitze*. The view is marvellous, chiefly for the contrast between the multitude of peaks seen on one side and the great plain of Italy on the other. It is a glimpse of quite another world. Far below the eye rests on a village (Macugnaga), a familiar object, and above is the dark blue sky; but horizontally, far as the eye can reach, stretches a landscape wonderful in its strange beauty. The ascent of the arête takes more than an hour, and the descent quite as much. The ascent has been made from the Riffel in 5 hrs. At an ordinary pace, but steadily, in 6 hrs. 20 min., of which 1 hr. 20 min. on the arête.

The top of Monte Rosa has also been gained from the saddle between the *Höchste Spitze* and *Zumstein Spitze*, and the lower part of the ridge been reached from the Monte Rosa glacier side by several distinct routes. The ascent from Macugnaga is noticed in Rte. 120.

The *Lyskamn*, 14,889 ft., was at one time considered to be the highest point of the Monte Rosa range. It was first ascended in 1861 by a large party of English, including Mr. Hardy and Dr. Sibson, led by Peter Perru. Their route was that which has since been generally followed. Having gained the *Lysjoch*, they climbed the long ice arête (10 hrs., Riffel to the top). The ascent of this crest is difficult, requiring great caution, especially in avoiding the cornice. In 1869, a Mr. Chester fell from the ridge, and was killed; and in 1877 a party of 3 Englishmen and 3 guides, all fairly experienced climbers, perished. They were precipitated down the S. face of the peak, owing to the giving way of a large mass of the cornice on to which they had incautiously advanced. On the W. the mountain is excessively difficult, and accessible only under very favourable circumstances. In 1867,

and again in 1878, it was ascended from Gressoney by the S. arête, and this would appear to be by far the easiest and safest route.

*Zwillinge*. Either of these peaks can be reached from the passes skirting them (see below), but the *Schwärze Glacier* is at times formidably crevassed.

The *Breithorn* (13,685 ft.). Those who do not intend crossing into the Val d'Aosta by the St. Théodule (Rte. 128) will be gratified by ascending to the col. The scenery is grand, and the excursion neither dangerous, difficult, nor fatiguing, unless the snow be very soft. It is possible to ride as far as the glacier, in 2½ hrs. from Zermatt; it then takes 2½ hrs. fair walking to reach the summit of the pass, 10,899 ft. above the sea. The return to Zermatt may be made in 3½ hrs. From the hut on the col, where it is possible to sleep, the Breithorn may be ascended in about 3 hrs. by the snow slopes on the S. side. A surface softened by exposure to the morning sun is the only difficulty; the descent will take about 2 hrs. The view from the Breithorn is nearly equal to that from Monte Rosa, and there is no great peak in this part of the Alps which can be ascended with so little fatigue. Even children have been dragged to the summit.

The N. face of the Breithorn has also been climbed from the Riffel, but this is a difficult and often a very dangerous expedition.

The *Matterhorn*, 14,705 ft. (called *Mont Cervin* in Valtournanche), when seen from the Riffel, appears like a gigantic wedge piercing the sky. From Breuil the whole Italian face is a pile of terraced walls. Viewed from N. or S. the mountain has the form of a tower; from E. or W. of an obelisk. It has 3 ridges or arêtes—N.E. to the Hörnli; E., and more broken, to the ridge of St. Théodule; S.W., and still more irregular, towards the Dent d'Hérens. This arête begins at the base of the final peak with a jagged, nearly level, but very narrow ridge, which runs between precipices for about 660 ft. This is called the

*Epauze*, shoulder. It then at *Pic Tyndall* falls away steeply in a savage edge serrated above with the wildest crags, lower down round and wall-like. About midway rises a tower some 50 ft. high. Slopes of snow and smooth slabs lead down to the gap called *Col du Lion*, which properly terminates the arête. Beyond it rises a small peak called the *Tête du Lion*, and from this point the ridge passes on to the *Dent d'Hérens*. In 1857 the abbé Amé Gorret reached the *Tête du Lion*, but until 1865 the Matterhorn itself retained its prestige of invincibility. In 1860 Professor Tyndall and Mr. Vaughan Hawkins, who were the earliest to recognise the possibility of the ascent, made their first attempt, and got beyond the *Col du Lion*, but were obliged by the lateness of the hour to return. In 1862 Prof. Tyndall and Bennen succeeded in reaching the point of the shoulder, now called *Pic Tynall*, and in exploring the ridge some way farther; but again time failed them, and the difficulties were great. In the same year Mr. Whymper pitched his tent on the arête, 500 ft. above the *Col du Lion*, and made several attempts. One night he passed alone on this dizzy perch.

On the 13th of July, 1865, the redoubtable peak was at last won, but at a terrible cost. Two parties had arrived at Zermatt to make an attempt on the Matterhorn—the Rev. Charles Hudson and Mr. Hadow, with the Chamonix guide Michel Croz—Mr. Whymper and Lord Francis Douglas. They combined their forces, and with Peter Taugwalder as second guide, and his two sons as porters, started on the 13th by way of the Hörnli ridge. From the foot of the Matterhorn they passed for a little distance along the great E. face, and then mounted direct, without encountering any obstacle, to a height of 11,000 ft., where they pitched their tent. Starting the next morning at daylight, leaving a porter behind, they again found little to check them as far as the shoulder. Here, however, they had to turn on to the face overhanging the Zmutt

Glacier, and to traverse an icy slope of extreme steepness. This difficulty surmounted, the rest was easy, and Mr. Whymper, running forward, was the first man on the summit. They remained an hour, and then started for the descent, roped together. On the descent of the steep slope, Mr. Hadow slipped and knocked Croz over. Mr. Hudson and Lord Douglas were immediately dragged down, but Taugwalder and those behind him stood firm, and the rope parted. For a moment Mr. Whymper beheld his four comrades sliding on their backs, but they then disappeared over the precipice and were lost. The bodies of Mr. Hadow, Mr. Hudson, and Croz were afterwards found far below; that of Lord F. Douglas has not been found. The story of the Matterhorn is admirably told in Mr. Whymper's 'Scrambles.' The accident is to be attributed to the inexperience of Mr. Hadow, and to the fact that the rope was not kept tight.

On the 17th of July, in the same year, an Italian engineer, Signor Giordano, and his guides, succeeded in gaining the top from the Italian side. The party consisted of the guides J. A. Carrel, J. B. Bich, J. A. Meinet, and the abbé Amé Gorret. Passing the night on the highest of the 3 platforms used by Mr. Whymper, and assisted in some measure by Prof. Tyndall's cord, they reached the foot of the final peak, and a little above it found a ledge—the *Galerie* or *Corridor*—which led towards the N.W. face. This was a most perilous route: and the only passage from it a gully, down which 2 of the guides were lowered by their companions, who remained to assist them back. These two thus gained the N.W. face, whence the way was easy to the top. In 1867 a better course was found, and this ascent is called the first entirely on the side of Valtournanche. It was discovered by the guides Joseph and Pierre Maquinaz, who were accompanied to the end of the arête by Victor Maquinaz, César, and J. B. Carrel, and Félicité, the daughter of César Carrel. They left their ropes,

by which subsequent ascents were rendered less difficult. In 1868 Prof. Tyndall was the first to pass over the peak from Breuil to Zermatt.

A hut has now been built on the Cravate, at the height of 13,520 ft., by the Italian Alpine Club (which it is proposed to enlarge); steps have been cut and chains fixed in the worst places, so that the ascent is now comparatively safe from Breuil. On the Zermatt side a hut has also been built, and chains fixed at the worst spots. The crest of the Matterhorn is a delicate edge of snow 580 ft. in length, and about 6 ft. higher towards the E. than the W. The vision plunges from it direct to the alp at Breuil. The ascent by the Italian side is, in scenery, finer than the other, but longer, and on the whole, harder climbing. From Zermatt the hut is reached in 7 hrs., and the top in 3 to 5 more. Travellers who would hesitate to venture to the top may see something of the mountain by ascending from Zermatt to the Swiss *cabane*, situated (12,527 ft.) midway between the Furgge Glacier and the shoulder. Several ladies have ascended the Matterhorn, but those who have done so have been practised in mountain climbing.

The ascent of the Matterhorn is now frequently made in fine seasons—often by persons utterly incompetent for such an expedition, who unjustifiably risk, not only their own lives, but those of their guides and companions. The man who without much previous experience in the High Alps attempts the Matterhorn, or any similar peak, is something worse than foolish, and is so regarded by all with any knowledge of mountain craft. It can scarcely be hoped, however, unless warning is taken in time, that many more summers will elapse without a second Matterhorn accident. After recent snow, or in early summer, the mountain is often utterly inaccessible, and the advice of good guides must always be taken before attempting it.

The ascent of the *Dent d'Hérens* mentioned in Rte. 132.

The ascents of the *Tête Blanche*

and *Dent Blanche* are mentioned in Rte. 131.

The next in the line of the Zermatt peaks is

*k.* The *Gabelhorn*, 13,363 ft., first ascended by Messrs. Moore and Walker in 1865, by the S. arm of the Trift Glacier, and the N.E. arête, reaching the top in 10 hrs. 25 min. from Zermatt. From Zinal the best route is via the Col Durand, and along the ridge to the top.

*l.* *Rothhorn*, or *Moming* (13,855 ft.), a mountain with very steep and broken arêtes, that towards the S. of granite. It was ascended in 1864 from Zinal. The Rothhorn can be more easily ascended from Zermatt. But the two last-mentioned ascents from whatever direction are only fit for thoroughly practised climbers.

The *Weisshorn* has already been described (Rte. 126).

#### C. PASSES.

The *Weissthor*, *Lysjoch*, *Zarillingsjoch*, *Col de la Vulpelline*, *Col Durand*, *Triftjoch*.

For the passes of the Saasgrat, see Rte. 122.

The *New Weissthor Pass* to Macugnaga is so called to distinguish it from the old pass S.W. of the Cima di Jazzi (Rte. 121). It presents no great difficulty, is grand in its scenery, and can be made either to Mattmark or Macugnaga, from Zermatt or the Riffel. 9 or 10 hrs. are generally allowed. For two-thirds of the distance the track is over snow, but if this be in good order there is time to ascend the Cima on the way. From Zermatt the rte. lies up the Findelen valley and glacier, falling in with that from the Riffel on the basin of névé. The crevasses encountered on the Findelen are more numerous than on the Gorner Glacier, but with proper precautions there is no danger. It was here, however, in 1859, that a Russian gentleman lost his life when descending from the Weissthor. He fell into a crevasse, either through the rottenness of the rope, or the carelessness of his guides,

and died from the cold before assistance could be obtained. From the Riffl the track is identical with that to the Cima di Jazzi (see *ante*) as far as a central point in the great snow plateau, where it diverges l., winding along the rolling, glittering expanse, towards a depression N. of the Cima. The traveller suddenly finds himself on the brink of steep rocks, which stretch far away along the face of Monte Rosa, and sweep down precipitously to Macugnaga. Close at hand the traveller sees the ice-cased cliffs of the Strahlhorn, and solemn wilds of snow; but over Italy he has a more beautiful prospect—innumerable peaks, some shadowy on the horizon, others tinted like rainbows, and faintly glowing in the distant sunshine. The descent lies over steep but not dangerous rocks and snowbeds to the pasturages at the head of Val Anzasca.

This description applies to the pass now exclusively used by the guides. The route formerly followed bore away to the left, to a rocky head marking the junction of the ridge of the Saasgrat with the Alpine watershed. It followed the latter, a sharp snow-crest (the 'arête blanche') for some hundred yards before turning down the rocks towards Macugnaga. This pass is now seldom used except by travellers going from the Riffl to Mattmark, who cross the snow-crest and turn down to the N. at the same point as the old Macugnaga route did to the S.

Several high passes have been made from the Riffl into Italy over the Monte Rosa range. The *Sesia Joch* is described in Rte. 119. The best known and finest is the

*Lysjoch*, or *Silber Pass*, between the Parrotspitze and the Lyskamm, a magnificent rte., leading a traveller either to Gressoney or Alagna, past all the 9 peaks of Monte Rosa. Mr. W. Mathews has the credit of first opening it, in 1859, when he reached Gressoney in 13½ hrs. The time now generally allowed for average walkers is 11 hrs., without halts. Alagna can be reached in 10 hrs., and the new inn on the Col d'Ollen in 8 or 9. Although 14,040 ft. above the sea,

and crossing so wild and vast a chain, the Lysjoch is more fatiguing than difficult. The way lies up the *Monte Rosa Glacier* to the great plateau, and to the eastern of 2 depressions in the final ridge, between a swell of snow and the Parrotspitze. It then descends the E. branch of the *Lys Glacier*, between the S. buttress of the Lyskamm and the S. peaks of Monte Rosa, to the rocks above the top of the *Hohes Licht*. This is a well-known point of view both for the Lys Glacier and distant peaks, among which Mont Blanc rises at the head of the Val d'Aosta. A sharp descent down easy rocks leads to the Garstelet Glacier, which is crossed to the Col delle Piscie, or (if Gressoney is aimed at) the descent may be continued by easy snow-slopes E. of the Hohes Licht to the foot of the Garstelet Glacier. The inn on the Col d'Ollen is only 50 min. from the Col delle Piscie. In crossing the pass from the Italian side travellers must be careful to choose the E. gap farthest from the Lyskamm. The other is barred on the N. side by formidable crevasses.

The *Felik Joch*, between the Lyskamm and *Castor* (13,879 ft.), was also first passed by Mr. W. Mathews, with Mr. Jacob, in 1851, from the Cour de Lys châlet. It is about 13,400 ft. in height, more difficult, and longer in point of time than the Lysjoch. Perhaps the finest part of it is the grand *sérac* scenery of the *Zwillinge Glacier*. In August, 1876, a party of four, having missed the right track in crossing this pass when the snow was in very bad condition, were carried down in an avalanche of loose snow probably started by their own weight. Mr. Johnson and one guide, Franz Sarbach, were never seen again. Mr. Hayman and the other guide escaped, but spent the night on the glacier. They were found next morning by travellers from the Rifflberg. They were both badly frost-bitten, and Mr. Hayman died on the 12th day afterwards.

The *Zwillinge Joch*, between *Castor* and *Pollux*, first named *Col de Verra*

from the *Verra Glacier*, down which the descent is made to the *Val d'Ayas*, was discovered by Mr. Winkworth in 1863. Its height is about 13,000 ft., and it was reached by working eastward from the head of the *Schwärze Glacier*, and climbing a steep snow-wall.

The *Schwarzthor*, between the *Breit-horn* and *Pollux* (13,432 ft.), the western of the *Twins* (*Zweillinge*), was one of the early achievement of Mr. John Ball, pioneer here as elsewhere in the Alps. He crossed it in 1845 to the *Val d'Ayas*, and in the first series of 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers,' he has given a thrilling account of the difficulties he encountered from the depth of the snow, the size of the crevasses, and the incompetence of the guide. Wading nearly to the waist, he had to drag this man after him up the wildly broken *Schwärze Glacier*. The height of the pass is 12,777 ft. It leads to the *Val d'Ayas*, and is a fine glacier pass, the difficulties of which vary exceedingly, according to the state of the glaciers.

For the *St. Théodule* and *Furgenjoch*, see Rte. 128.

The *Col Tournanche* to Breuil, and the *Tiefenmatten Joch* to the *Valpelline*, are two mountaineers' routes. The former is a very stiff climb on the N. side; the latter is exposed to falling séracs. For the *Col de la Valpelline* see Rte. 132, and for the direct glacier routes to Arolla and Chermontane, Rtes. 132 and 136.

The *Col d'Hérens* (11,418 ft.) is described in Rte. 132. The summit of the pass, and the *Tête Blanche*, which rises 886 ft. above it, may be reached in a long day's excursion, returning to Zermatt in the evening.

Zermatt to Zinal (Rte. 129). 5 or more glacier-passes have been made from Zermatt to the *Val d'Anniviers* by mountaineers. Of these 2 are here described. The

*Col Durand* at the head of the *Durand Glacier*, between the *Pointe de Zinal* and *Mont Durand*. The chief difficulty is a great *bergschrund* running across the upper part of the *Durand Glacier*, and in the latter part of the season sometimes 20 ft. wide, and a

very serious obstacle. On reaching the summit from the *Zinal* side, one of the most striking views in the Alps is suddenly presented. The peak of the *Matterhorn* in all its grandeur is seen exactly opposite, rising to the height of very nearly 15,000 ft., while the spectator is himself upon a terrace about 11,400 ft. above the sea. The *Zmutt Glacier*, filling the valley between, is reached by a steep descent, down the *Hohwang Glacier* and slopes of the *Ebihorn*. From 12 to 15 hrs. should be allowed for this expedition.

The *Col de la Dent Blanche*, from the *Durand Glacier* to the *Schönbühl Glacier* under the *Dent Blanche*, is a longer pass with fine near, but less extensive general views.

E. of the *Col Durand* is the *Arben Joch*, between *Mont Durand* and the *Gabelhorn*. It is seldom traversed.

The most popular pass from *Zinal* to *Zermatt* is the *Triftjoch*, 11,614 feet. This is reached by the ravine of the *Trift*, which opens behind *Zermatt*, or by crossing the shoulder of the mountain to the *Trift Glacier*, which is then ascended close to the base of the *Trifthorn*. A very steep slope of ice leads up from a *bergschrund* to the pass, which is a mere gap in an extremely sharp ridge connecting the *Trifthorn* with the *Gabelhorn*. The view from it in both directions is most grand and striking, and well worth an excursion from *Zermatt*. On the W. the rocks fall away in a precipice of formidable depth to the *Durand Glacier*, and the descent of this wall is the main difficulty of the pass. It tries the steadiness of both travellers and guides, although now much facilitated by a long chain, which renders the passage of some icy slopes comparatively easy, and by a ladder and rope near the base of the precipice. There is always some risk from falling stones. The *Durand Glacier* is not difficult, save that in one crevassed portion it is sometimes necessary to take to the rocks. This pass may with more advantage be made from the *Zinal* side, as it is easier to ascend than to descend steep rocks. It is a

day's work of 11 or 12 hrs., including the ordinary halts. The hut at Moun-tet shortens this by 4 hrs. for those who sleep there.

It is possible in a single day to combine the most interesting portions of both expeditions, and return to Zermatt in the evening. For this purpose the traveller should first ascend to the top of the Trift Pass, and then, returning to the foot of the Trift Glacier, ascend the shoulder of the *Gabelhorn*, until a point is gained nearly opposite the Matterhorn, the view of which can scarcely be surpassed by that from the Col Durand. From thence it is possible to descend the very steep southern slopes of the Gabelhorn, near to the lower end of the Zmutt Glacier; but as this is a matter of considerable difficulty, it should not be attempted unless there be time in case of failure to effect a retreat. It is practicable to effect a passage between the peaks of the Upper and Lower Gabelhorn, and so reach the foot of the Zmutt Glacier.

*Moming Pass.* This very fine but difficult pass is described in Rte. 130.

A high level tour of Monte Rosa is sometimes made by mountaineers.—1, by the *Nev Weissthor* to Macugnaga; 2, *Col delle Loccie* to Alagna; 3, *Col d'Olen*; 4, *Lysjock* to the Riffel.

For ordinary travellers there is the circuit by the *Monte Moro* to Macugnaga and Ponte Grande; *Barranca Pass* to Varallo, and *Col d'Olen* to Gressoney; *Col de Ranzola* and *Col de Jon* to Châtillon; and *Col de St. Théodule* to Zermatt—a delightful round, or from Gressoney, *Bettliner Pass* to Fiéry in Val d'AYas, and *Cimes Blanches* to Zermatt.

Mr. Reilly's map of the Valpelline and Monte Rosa will be found very useful in these tours. The Swiss Alp Club map of the Pennine Alps, in sheets on a scale of  $\frac{1}{250,000}$ , is invaluable to mountaineers in the Zermatt district. Its nomenclature is in some cases, however, open to question.

## ROUTE 128.

ZERMATT, BY THE COL DE ST. THÉODULE, TO CHÂTILLON.

| Zermatt                     | Hrs. |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Col de St. Théodule . . . . | 4½   |
| Breuil . . . . .            | 2    |
| Val Tournanche . . . . .    | 2    |
| Châtillon . . . . .         | 3    |

The *St. Théodule* or *Matte* is the easiest of the high glaciers of the Alps, and on that account the most frequented. Horses can occasionally be taken across. The snow on the glacier is often deep, and the time taken is then of course much longer. No one should, however, attempt to pass it alone. In the very common case of clouds resting on the summit, it is very easy to miss the way, and fatal accidents have occurred from the neglect of the rope, which on this, as on every glacier where the ice is coated with snow, ought to be used, not from any immediate apprehension of danger, but because it is the proper way of averting it.

Many hundred travellers, including ladies, cross the pass every year. The usual plan for ladies, is to take a horse from Zermatt for 2 hrs. (10 fr.), or 3 hrs. (15 fr.), to the glacier. From this point it is a walk of 1½ hr. to the Col, and of 1¼ hr. to the foot of the Fourneaux, where mules may sometimes be found in the season; or, if thought necessary, a guide may be sent on to order a mule from the inn at Breuil (6 fr.). For tariff of guides over the pass see Zermatt.

By starting from the Riffel the ascent is shortened by half an hour, and this way is the more interesting, as it leads across the Gorner Glacier, but, of course, horses cannot be used. In making the pass from the Italian side, the ascent to the Riffel will take rather more time than the descent to Zermatt.

The path on leaving Zermatt follows the l. bank of the stream, and in about 15 min. crosses the torrent from the Zmutt glacier; it then winds upwards by meadows, and chalets, and in

15 min. from Zermatt begins a rapid descent through woods to the pastures on the W. side of the Gorner Glacier. Its descent is on a level, with a fine view was the ice-fall to Monte Rosa. The descent from the *Furgenjoch*, descending in a deep rift, is then crossed, and the space again becomes very steep. From Zermatt the pastures are reached, and the track becomes bad, lying over rocks and loose stones. With no definite path, till in the Alps, where the glacier is reached. It is singularly smooth and free from crevasses, except near the col, where there are always a few covered over, and dangerous whenever snow has fallen freshly.

The summit is 10,899 Eng. ft. above the sea. The prospect immediately around is of one continuous ice-field. Then, the eye wanders down the valley of St. Niklaus to the Bernese Alps, sweeps round by the Saas Grät to Monte Rosa, looks across to the peaks of Cogne and rests upon that wonder of the Alps, the Cervin or Matterhorn. To the E., in immediate proximity are the *Petit Mt. Cervin* (12,749 ft.) and *Breithorn*; to the W. the *Theodulhorn* (11,391 ft.).

On the crest of the Col there is some bare rock, and a little space so exposed that the snow seldom rests upon it. Here Saussure remained 3 days, with his son and attendants, engaged in experiments. Traces of the rude cabins in which they sheltered still exists, and also of a redoubt thrown up 3 centuries ago by the Valaisans, and known by the name of Fort St. Théodule.

The present hut was erected in 1854, and here bread, cheese, and hot wine may be obtained during the summer. It is the highest habitation in Europe, and has 8 beds for travellers. A larger structure was commenced, but was blown down while still incomplete.

The descent towards the Val d'Aosta lies over the glacier for 40 min.; then by a steep descent down rocks and loose rubbish, called the *Fourneaux*, for 45 min. At the foot of this, or even at the foot of the glacier,

mules left by travellers on the ascent may often be found waiting during the season. 1½ hr. over pastures will bring you to the

*Inn*: H. du Mt. Cervin, fair, at Breuil (6930 ft.), situated on an eminence in the midst of very grand scenery. Over-head tower *Mont Cervin* and the *Dent d'Hérens*, here called *Mont Tabor*; to the E. rise the snows of the *Breithorn*, on the S. the singular rocks of the *Château des Dames*. Many charming short walks may be found in the neighbourhood, with views of the stupendous Matterhorn.

In preference to passing the Théodule, mountaineers occasionally cross the ridge close to the Matterhorn. This pass is known as the *Furgenjoch*, and is somewhat shorter than the Théodule. There is a steep slope on the N. side, where ice-axes may be required.

[From Breuil the Breithorn may be ascended more conveniently than from Zermatt. It was from this hotel that all the early attempts were made to scale the Matterhorn, and the landlord will point out the *Col du Lion*, *Cravate*, *Pic Tyndall*, *Epaule*, and other points in the tremendous ascent. The hut on the Cravate (13,527 ft.) is reached in 6 to 7 hrs., and the summit in 4 to 5 hrs. more, under ordinary circumstances. Very active climbers, under exceptionally favourable conditions, have reached the top from the inn at Breuil, and returned to it on the same day, via the Hörnli ridge and Furgenjoch; a feat mentioned not to excite emulation, but to show the worthlessness of "times" on high peaks.

E. is a pass to the *Inn* at Fiéry in Val d'Ayas, falling in with the rte. over the Cimes Blanches, and W. the *Col de Val Cornère* to Préraven in Valpellina. In 1860 Mr. Jacomb, in making the latter pass, ascended the *Château des Dames*, which he estimated at about 12,000 ft., and found very difficult. In 1873 Mr. A. G. Paller reached the top of the *Dent d'Hérens* from Breuil, but this is a circuitous and severe climb.]

At the inn are mules and side-saddles. For peaks or passes guides are to be found at Valtournanche, and some of them are celebrated by their ascent of the Matterhorn, viz., Joseph Maquignaz, J. A. Carrel, Pierre Maquignaz, B. Bich, Victor Maquignaz, Emmanuel Maquignaz, and S. Meinet.

There is no occasion for a guide to Châtillon. Descending to the little plain and following the l. bank of the stream, an extraordinary scene of desolation is crossed, then another little plain succeeded by another waste, and the chalets of Aouet. The path then enters a ravine, and follows a narrow ledge through magnificent scenery to the chapel of *N. D. de la Garde* (1 hr. 15 min. from Breuil); near this the torrent makes 1 or 2 fine waterfalls in a deep gorge (Gouffre de Bousserailles), like that of Pfeffers, which has been made accessible by wooden galleries. Two waterfalls descend into the narrow cleft, which is almost closed overhead by its rocky walls. A short and steep descent follows, and the torrent is crossed to the rt. bank. 30 min. farther the path again crosses the stream, and a short ascent leads to

*Valtournanche* (5080 ft.) (Inn: H. du Mont Rose, homely but good), a village finely situated on an eminence commanding a magnificent view down the valley, to the snows of the Punta di Tersiva. In the church is a tablet to the memory of Chanoine Carrel of Aosta, a well-known name to all Alpine explorers. See Aosta.

[N.E. is the *Grand Tournalin* (11,520 ft.). The ascent can be made in 4 hrs. by a new path from Valtournanche, and is highly recommended by Mr. Whymp. A panorama of the view from the summit has been published by the Italian Alpine Club.

The *Bec du Creton* (12,253 ft.) can be ascended from Val Tournanche.]

A pass, called the *Col de Portola*, leads from Valtournanche to Ayas or Brussonne. The path is difficult to find without a guide. The height of the col is 7995 ft.

There are also paths across the hills to Val St. Barthélemi, and so to Val

d'Aosta. A car-road is in construction from Val Tournanche to Châtillon.

A steep set of zigzags leads down to the bridge, which carries the traveller to the rt. bank.

The whole of the scenery below Valtournanche is magnificent. The valley is green and usually shaded by chestnut and walnut trees; the torrent sparkles and foams among rocks and precipices, and the Mont Cervin is occasionally in view. About an hour from Valtournanche some extraordinary remains of a *Roman Aqueduct* may be seen on the face of the rock, to the rt., and they are continued at intervals for several miles. The finest portion consists of some very perfect arches in front of a cliff several hundred feet above the valley, nearly opposite the village of Antey, hanging as in a picture against the rock. The road continues on the rt. bank for nearly 2 hrs., then crosses for about 10 min., and returns to the rt. for the rest of the way. The mule-track for the last 2 m. rises high, but pedestrians can find paths close to the stream and through shady meadows till close to Châtillon. This part of the valley is very hot in summer, and should be passed early in the morning or late in the evening.

*Châtillon.* (See Rte. 134.)

*Route Reversed.*—Guides, horses, and side-saddles will be found at Châtillon, at Valtournanche, and at Breuil. Horse from Châtillon to Breuil 10 fr., Breuil to the glacier 5 or 6 fr. Guide, Breuil to Zermatt, 15 fr.

A little beyond Châtillon a foot-path to the rt. goes along the stream through shaded meadows and joins the bridle-path about 2 m. farther on. It takes 4 hrs. moderate walking to reach Valtournanche, and about 2½ hrs. to go from thence to Breuil. 3 hrs. are quite sufficient for the ascent to the Col, unless there be much fresh snow; and 3½ hrs. or less will take the traveller from the summit to Zermatt or to the Riffel.

*Pass of the Cines Blanches.*—To

reach the Val d'Ayas from Zermatt by the Col de St. Théodule involves a much longer passage over glacier than in the ordinary route to Breuil, but presents no difficulty unless after fresh snow, when it may be very fatiguing.

A little below the col, on the Italian side, the course turns off l. and descends a plateau of snow to the chain of the Cimes Blanches (1½ hr.), whence traversing the Aventura Glacier the chalets of Aventura (1½ hr.) are reached, and in 2 hrs. more the Inn at Fiery, near St. Giacomo d'Ayas. The valley may be descended to Brusson in 1½ hr. (Rte. 125), or the *Betta Furca* may be crossed to Gressoney, but the latter—by a bridle-path—is a long day's walk.

The Col Townanche (11,398 ft.) is the depression between the Dent d'Hérens and the Matterhorn, and was first shown to be practicable as a pass by Messrs. Hudson and Jacob in 1864, when they crossed it from Zermatt to Breuil in 13½ hrs. From the *Stockje* they ascended the E. branch of the *Tiefenmatten Glacier*, and a frozen snow-slope, in one place at an angle of 54°. Two difficult bergschrunds barred the way. The pass can only be taken from the Zermatt side, and is not to be recommended.

## ROUTE 129.

ST. NIKLAUS, BY THE TURTMAN THAL,  
TO ST. LUC IN VAL D'ANNIVIERS.  
[ASCENT OF BELLA TOLA.]

| St. Niklaus.           | Hrs. |
|------------------------|------|
| Augstbord Pass . . . . | 4½   |
| Grüben . . . . .       | 2    |
| Zmeiden Pass . . . .   | 2½   |
| St. Luc. . . . .       | 2    |

This route is a pleasant way of reaching or leaving Zermatt, and forms a variation on the old Visp route. Sierre can be reached in 2 easy days from St. Niklaus by sleeping at Zmeiden. The whole road is passable by mules. Those who wish thoroughly to see this dis-

trict will, in place of descending from St. Luc to Sierre, turn up Val d'Anniviers to Zinal, and thence cross to Evolena (see Rte. 130). The paths are practicable for mules, but rough and solitary, so that a single traveller will do well to take a guide.

The path to the *Augstbord Pass* leaves the main road above the village of St. Niklaus and runs through woods and rocks, ascending gradually for nearly an hour. It then crosses the Jung torrent, and ascends by steep zigzags through a forest to the chalets and chapel of Jung, about 2½ hrs. from St. Niklaus. The white chapel of Jung is plainly seen from St. Niklaus, and from it there is a magnificent view of the valley and its mountains.

From Jung the path ascends steeply for about 10 minutes, then bears away to the left until it again reaches the Jung torrent. It then turns sharply to the right, and keeps tolerably level until in about an hour from Jung the shoulder at the entrance of the *Augstbord Thal* is reached. There is a pile of stones at this point, and the views up and down the valley of St. Niklaus and up the Rhonethal are again magnificent. For the next half-hour the path, here rough, descends towards the stream in the *Augstbord* valley. After reaching the l. bank of the stream the path ascends through a dreary waste of stones, and at last reaches the Col by a few zigzags.

From the pass itself (9350 ft.) there is not much view, but the *Schwarzhorn* (10,520 ft.)—sometimes confused with the lower *Dreizehntenhorn*—on the right may be ascended in an hour by a rough path. It commands a panoramic view superior to that from the *Bella Tola*, and for united grandeur and extent scarcely equalled in the Alps by any summit of similar elevation. The *Weisshorn* and *Mischabel* are superb objects in the foreground, and (except the *Matterhorn*) all the great Alps from *Mont Blanc* to the *St. Gothard* are in view.

A descent through a stony valley leads to the chalets of the *Grüben Alp*, where there is a fine view into the

Turtman Thal and over the opposite mountains. The remaining descent into the valley is through forest.

*Zmeiden* (*Inn*: Weisshorn, good, charmingly placed in a green meadow on the banks of the stream, with rocky knolls cropping out of the turf). Guides and mules.

*Zmeiden* (6050 ft.) is considerably higher than St. Niklaus, so that it takes nearly an hour more from St. Niklaus to *Zmeiden* than from *Zmeiden* to St. Niklaus.

The *Turtman Thal* is a wild valley about 15 m. in length, from the point where its stream falls into the Rhone at Turtman, to the glacier N. of the Weisshorn, whence it takes its rise. Though, in addition to numerous chalets perched on the upper pastures, it contains several hamlets, these consist exclusively of *mayens*, which are inhabited for a few weeks only in the spring and autumn. A magnificent forest formerly covered the valley, but for many years the axe has been busy, and large clearings made. The timber is partly floated, partly taken by a slide, to Turtman, where it is sawn. The summer inhabitants of the Turtman Thal come from the German portion of the Valais; those of the Val d'Anniviers and Val d'Hérens are French-speaking people of Latin origin, and superior in point of appearance. These three valleys are free from cretinism.

[*Zmeiden to Turtman* (Tourtemagne) (*Inn*: Poste) (Rte. 56) is a very pleasant bridle-path down the valley of 3½ hrs. The road does *not* pass in sight of the water-fall behind that village.]

[*Turtman Glacier*. The valley can be ascended to its head, 3½ m. from *Zmeiden*, and a visit made to this magnificent glacier, which may be traversed with the greatest ease to the foot of the ice-fall under the cliffs of the Weisshorn. Mules can be taken nearly to the foot of the glacier. Over its head lies the difficult Bies Joch to Randa (see p. 358), and the Brunegg Joch to a point in the valley between

that place and St. Niklaus. The latter pass lies N. of the Brunegg horn, and is free from difficulty on the E. side. Local knowledge, however, is requisite to hit off a path boldly carried along the precipitous sides of a gorge descending into the valley.

There are two bridle-passes from Gruben to St. Luc, called respectively (a) the *Zmeiden Pass*—the more beautiful, direct, and easy, not requiring a guide; (b) the *Pas du Bœuf*, longer, but with the advantage of permitting the ascent of the Bella Tola by the way. S. of these is the less interesting (c) *Pas de la Forcletta* leading to Ayer and Zinal, and the glacier pass of the (d) *Col des Diablons*, from the Turtman Glacier to Zinal.

a. *Zmeiden Pass*.—Crossing the stream above the village, and then bearing a little to the right, the path ascends through the forest by steep zig-zags immediately opposite the village for nearly an hour. At the top of the steep ascent the path turns to the l., and soon reaches the lower *Zeülen* chalets. Going from them nearly straight up the mountain the upper chalets are reached, commanding magnificent views of the Weisshorn and its glaciers. Continuing nearly straight, in a few minutes the first of the little piles of stone which mark the track all the way to the Col is seen.

The ground is rough and broken, but the final ascent is by easy zig-zags up a stony slope covered with blue gentians. The Col lies between a steep pinnacle of quartz called the *Tonnöt*, 9921 ft., and another rocky point on the N., which is said to command as fine a view as the Bella Tola. The scene on the south side is wild and striking—of dark and broken cliffs, and ruins of the quartz rock which forms the main ridge, while to the W. starts up the fantastic obelisk of the Bec de Bossons. The descent is down a gently sloping alp, with no defined path, as far as a brow, crowned by a cross, from which the fall is rapid. From this point the church of St. Luc and the Val d'Anniviers are seen, and

to the rt. is a white chalet, with a cross, from which the path to St. Luc is plain.

For a traveller coming in the opposite direction, the path is the same as that to the *Bella Tola* (see below) as far as the white chalet. It then bears to the right towards a wooden cross then goes up the stony and marshy valley, and in a short time the Col is seen. (N.B. beware of going too much to the l.) The Col is between two rugged peaks; that on the N. having on its S. side a remarkable white pinnacle or obelisk. Before long the zigzags up the Col are seen, and the traveller has then only to make the best of his way through the rocks, and pools, and marshes, as there is no regular track. From the Col the path is well marked.

b. The *Pas du Beuf*, N. of the Zmeiden Pass, is more frequently traversed for the sake of ascending the *Bella Tola*, and cannot well be found without a guide. The path is the same as to the Zmeiden Pass to the head of the forest, where it turns rt. along the mountain-side to the entrance of the *Bortenthal* (the 2nd valley on the l.), from which all distant view is shut out. The Col is 9154 ft. above the sea.  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. beyond it a mule-path, rt., leads up to

c. The *Pas de la Forcletta*, 9800 ft. (6 or 7 hrs. to Zinal), has little to recommend it, except its directness and view of the Weisshorn. The path leaves the Turtman Thal at the hamlet above Gruben, slants up S.W. through forest, and, passing 2 sets of chalets, enters a bare valley, which it follows to the crest. The descent is down grass to the wood above Ayer, about 1 hr. from Zinal. A more interesting route has been followed—by walking for  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. up the Turtman Glacier, then ascending rt. to the mountain ridge (of white quartz), and crossing it close to the Diablons. On the other side is a very stony valley, leading either to Ayer or Zinal.

d. The Col des Diablons, between the Weisshorn and Diablons, is reached in 7 or 8 hrs. by mounting the E. branch of the Turtman Glacier, crossing the ridge dividing it from the W. branch,

and ascending under the rocks of the Diablons (11,836 ft.) The descent to Zinal is quite easy. This is a very fine pass, suited for moderate mountaineers.

St. Luc (Inn: H. de la Bella Tola, very good and moderate, civil landlord, who is also an experienced guide). This village—here commonly called Luc—is perched upon the steep E. slope of the valley, 5453 ft. above the sea, and about 2000 ft., or 1 hr., above Vissoye. It has been twice nearly burned down since 1840, and so far rebuilt in stone, and commands a magnificent view of the head of the valley, with the (here) chisel-shaped head of the Matterhorn, locally called *Grande Couronne*, towering over the Col Durand (Rte. 127).

*Tariff of Mules.*

|                                         | Fr. |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| To Sierre . . . . .                     | 8   |
| Zmeiden by <i>Pas du Beuf</i> . . . . . | 12  |
| Ditto with <i>Bella Tola</i> . . . . .  | 14  |
| Evolens by Col de Torrent . . . . .     | 18  |
| Ditto, by way of Zinal . . . . .        |     |
| (2 days) . . . . .                      | 28  |
| Zermatt in 3 days . . . . .             | 60  |

Guide 6 fr. per day; porter 4 fr. Basile Pont is a good guide.

*Ascent of the Bella Tola from St. Luc.*—Mules can go up the mountain to within half an hour of the top, but over a great part of the distance there is no regular track, and the traveller without a guide is pretty sure to lose his way. The path ascends behind the little inn at St. Luc, keeping tolerably level for about 25 minutes, when it strikes off to the l. and ascends by some zigzags towards three chalets. It then keeps to the rt. and skirting a wood ascends over pastures to a very conspicuous white chalet with a wooden cross,  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from St. Luc. The path then bears away to the l. and for nearly half an hour is well marked, but then comes out on a trackless Alp. The mountain is not seen at this part of the route. After some time, if the right track is taken, the peak and its zigzags are seen, and thenceforward there is no difficulty in finding the way. Mules could

scarcely be taken up for the last  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. The view from the top is very fine (10138 ft.). About  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from the top is a small hut where it would be possible, but not pleasant, to pass the night. Those who are going on to Zmeiden will, at the foot of the zigzags, take the path over the *Pas de Bœuf*.

From St. Luc a steep mule-path leads in about an hour to the char-road by which Sierre is reached (see Rte. 130).

[There is a bridle-path of much beauty from *Susten*, on the Simplon Road, leading in 5 or 6 hrs. by the *Ill-see* and Chaudolin to St. Luc. The *Ill-see* is 7710 ft.; the col, between the *Illhorn* (N.) and *Schwarzhorn* (S.), some hundred feet higher. By making  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. détour, a crest overlooking the precipice N. of the *Illhorn* may be visited. It is locally called the *Eboulement* (or *Illgraben*). Here the whole side of a mountain seems to have given way, and fallen as a vast ruin into the valley, leaving a yawning gulf surrounded by crumbling and treacherous crags. The *Illhorn* (8937 ft.) may be ascended; but the view is not equal to that from either the *Bella Tola* or the *Schwarzhorn*. The ascent to the col from *Susten* is very fine, passing through a dense forest of old pines, with peeps to the rt. into the *Illgraben*. The descent to St. Luc is a walk of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. (of 2 up). To the point of view on the edge towards Sierre is an excursion from St. Luc. There and back will take 4 or 5 hrs.; it is a beautiful walk, for a long way through forest—guide 6 fr.]

### ROUTE 130.

#### SIERRE TO ZINAL—VAL D'ANNIVIERS —PASSES FROM ZINAL.

|                   | Hrs.            |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Nione . . . . .   | 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Vissoye . . . . . | 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Zinal . . . . .   | 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ |

The *Val d'Anniviers*, or *Einfisch Thal*, opens immediately S. of Sierre. Until lately it was visited by but few per-

sons. There are now comfortable inns at *St. Luc*, *Vissoye*, and *Zinal*, and the valley is much frequented by those who seek for glacier passes and fine scenery.

The inhabitants of the valley speak a *patois*, nearly identical with that spoken in the neighbouring *Val d'Hérens*, and differing but little from that of the *Val d'Aosta*. They would repay the study of an antiquary or ethnologist. In the peculiar custom of each family having several houses in different parts of the valley, at which they reside alternately, a tradition of the habits of an old nomad tribe may possibly be recognised. The summer villages are known as "*Mayens*." They are more simple and courteous to strangers than in most of the districts frequently visited by tourists. The dress of the females is peculiar, and anything but becoming, while that of the *Val d'Hérens* is pretty.

Beyond the bridge of the Simplon road, a mile outside Sierre, the char-road up *Val d'Anniviers* branches off on the rt. It at once ascends steeply. A fine view of the peaks at the head of the valley is gained before reaching *Nione* ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr.). The road high above the torrent winds round the sides of precipitous ravines, penetrating the projecting spurs by three short tunnels. The village of *Fang* is left below (here the steep footpath to *St. Luc* branches rt.) amongst fine walnut-trees, and soon afterwards the valley opens and *Vissoye* comes into sight.

*Vissoye* (H. d'Anniviers, recommended) is the principal village of the valley, and is finely situated.

2 m. above *Vissoye*, just below the village of *Gremenz*, the valley divides into two branches: the western, leading to the glacier of *Moiry* and the principal pass into the *Val d'Hérens*, by the *Col de Torrent* (see below), is called the *Val de Moiry*; the eastern, which descends from the glacier of *Zinal*, the *Val de Zinal*.

The char-road passing *Ayer* (near which cobalt and nickel are found), where a path from *St. Luc* falls in, is continued to

*Zinal* (Inn: H. Durand, a good and cheap (6 fr. pension) mountain inn; Baptiste Epinay, the landlord, well-acquainted with the district), the last hamlet in this branch of the valley, only inhabited for a few weeks in the summer, 2½ hrs. from Vissoye.

Zinal (5530 ft.) is a most interesting centre for excursions, lying in the neighbourhood of grand glaciers and magnificent mountains, and the view from the inn is highly suggestive. A fine feature is the dark *Lo Besso* (12,057 ft.), with bold forked crest, but the neighbouring giants look down upon it. From its base stretches the *Durand* or *Zinal Glacier*, with the plainly-marked *Col Durand* (Rte. 127) at its head, between the *Pointe de Zinal W.*, and the *Mont Durand E.* To the W. of this glacier basins are the *Dent Blanche*, 14,318 ft., and *Grand Cornier*, 13,022 ft., to the E. the *Gubelhorn*, 13,363 ft., *Rothhorn* or *Moming*, 13,855 ft., and *Weisshorn*, 14,804 ft. There are numerous high ascents, and for ordinary travellers various beautiful

*Excursions*—a. The *Durand* or *Zinal Glacier*, 2 good m. from the inn, though black with moraine and débris, and shut in towards its lower end, expands above into far-stretching fields of unsullied snow. The path runs along the W. side of the valley to the gorge at the foot of the glacier, and for about 1 m. beyond it, as far as the bank is practicable. The glacier is then entered upon—just where it begins to grow white—and crossed to the E. side. Persons able to do so should not fail to go as far as the hut at *Le Mountet*, to gain the superb view of the amphitheatre of peaks enclosing the head of the glacier; and the excursion may be continued to the *Roi Noir*; 10 or 11 hrs. must be allowed, and a guide taken.

b. The track to the *Arpittetta Alp*, the termination of the valley-side, cut off by the *Moming Glacier* from *Lo Besso*, crosses the waste of moraines which conceal the skirts of the *Durand* glacier. The view is superb, particularly of the W. side of the *Weisshorn*,

which, seen from this point, may rank with the E. side of *Monte Rosa* and the S. side of *Mont Blanc*. An old moraine, hundreds of feet above the present glacier, offers an agreeable terrace-walk.

c. The *Alp de l'Allée* is another fine point of view. This is on the W. side of the valley, opposite the *Arpittetta Alp*, and reached by a cattle-path from the stone chalet at the foot of the *Zinal* glacier. It rises to the *Pigne de l'Allée*, directly S. of the *Col de l'Allée*, a high pass to the W. branch of the *Val d'Anniviers*. The *Bouquetin* (11,431 ft.), a commanding point near the *Grand Cornier*, may be gained from this col.

The two following excursions are easy, and do not differ from each other much in length; they include some of the finest scenery of the district:—(c) *Ridge of the Crête de Millon* (guide). Path mounts from *Zinal* to white chalet, then to l. to join a higher path, leading to rt. to a high plateau between *Diablons* and *Crête de Millon*, not seen from *Zinal*. Cross this S.E. to low gap in the *Crête*, from which is a splendid view of *Weisshorn* and its glacier, and the tremendous séracs of the *Moming Glacier*, with the singularly small top of the *Rothhorn* above. Descend by the *Weisshorn Glacier* and moraines to the *Arpittetta Alp*.

(d) *Garde de Bordon*. Ascend to *Col de Sorebois* (this détour may be avoided by rather more of a scramble to the l.), then to l. along crest of ridge to summit (10,879 ft.). An unnecessary circuit to rt., involving a descent, is generally made here to avoid easy rocks. Descent: along ridge S.E. to lower summit, thence direct and easy to *Alp de l'Allée*. So fine a panorama (extending from *Mont Blanc* to the *Furka*) is rarely to be obtained in the course of so easy and varied a walk. Grand views of the *Weisshorn*, the glacier, &c., in the descent. No snow work.

The fine peak of the *Grand Cornier* N. of the *Dent Blanche* has been climbed both by its N. and S. ridges. It is much easiest from the S.; but

from any direction is only for trained climbers, with good guides.

The *Diablons*, 11,836 ft., can be ascended in 5 hrs. from Zinal. The view from the top is magnificent, and the ascent, though somewhat fatiguing, is well worth the trouble, and not difficult for persons of ordinary activity.

The great peaks which overlook the glacier have, with the exception of the Weisshorn, all been gained from this side. They are feats of sheer climbing, fit only for men skilled in the craft. The lower summit of Lo Besso, though a severe scramble, may be reached in 3 to 4 hrs. from the Club-hut at Mountet.

#### *Glacier Passes from Zinal.*

c. The *Col des Diablons* to Zmeiden (see Rte. 129). The passes to Zermatt are described in Rte. 127. These passes are rather more easy from this side. The start is made from *Le Mountet*. Time over the Trift—Mountet to foot of rocks 2 hrs.; joch 1½; foot of Trift gl. 2.10; Zermatt 2 (easy).

*Moming Pass*, a difficult but magnificent pass between the Rothhorn and Schallhorn, was first made in 1864. The snow and ice scenery is superb. The way from the Arpitetta Alp lies along the moraine of the Weisshorn Glacier to the Moming Glacier, up the rocks l. of the ice-fall, and from the névé by steep snow (50°) to the col, 12,750 ft. Descent by a difficult ice-fall, and the W. side of the ridge connecting Rothhorn and Mettelhorn, to a gap through which the Triftbach is reached by the Rothhorn Glacier. Time, 12 hrs.

*Schullen Joch*, between the Schallhorn and Weisshorn, to Randa, too difficult to be often attempted. The ascent from the Weisshorn Glacier is by steep ice and snow slopes, and the descent on the E. side by the l. bank of an almost continuous ice-fall to the lower part of the Hohlicht Glacier. The pass has been made in 9 hrs. to the top, 5 down.

*Col du Grand Cornier*, between the Dent Blanche and Grand Cornier to Evolena. The ascent is through the

séracs near the cliffs of the Dent Blanche, and then to the rt. up the rocks to the col. The descent is by easy snow-slopes to the Alp Bricolla. Time of the first passage in 1864, Zinal to col, 6½ hrs.; Evolena, 4½.

In going to Evolena from Zinal by the ordinary rte. of the *Col de Torrent*, the traveller has first either to cross the Col de Sorebois, or go round by Gremenz.

*Col de Sorebois* (9259 ft.). Crossing the stream at Zinal the path mounts, in zigzags, to rough upland pastures, which are traversed W. to the col, a little S. of the Corne de Sorebois. The col commands a magnificent view of the Weisshorn and neighbouring peaks, and is well worth passing by those who are not going to Evolena, but back to St. Luc. The descent is steep, S.W. down a grassy alp to a point in the Val Moiry, directly opposite the rough track of the Col de Torrent, 5½ hrs. from Evolena.

To pass round takes 2½ hrs.' descent to Gremenz, and 1½ hr.'s ascent of the wild Val de Moiry to the bridge where the route over the Col de Sorebois falls in, but one on foot may shorten the distance. He must not cross the stream to Ayer, but opposite that village seek a path which runs along a conduit through the forest to the Moiry valley. It is nearly on a level, and a pretty walk.

From Gremenz to Evolena there are three passes—*Col de Torrent*, *Pass de Lena*, and *Col de Brénon*.

a. The *Col de Torrent* may be traversed in fine weather without a guide, a conspicuous chalet marking the point where the track leaves the Val Moiry and ascends the mountain. Time, 5 or 6 hrs. After entering the Val de Moiry the path mounts through fine Alpine scenery to the wild and solitary upper valley. In 4 m. from Gremenz some rude chalets are reached (1¼ hr.), where a stone building on a knoll to the l. marks the foot of the pass of the Sorebois from Zinal. The steep mountain on the rt. is here ascended, bearing to the l., with view of the *Glacier de Moiry*. There are numerous cattle-

tracks, but keeping l. the traveller soon opens a green vale, and may see the cross on the col at its head. The usual route is high up on the N. side of this valley, passing N. of the lonely *Lac Zozanne*, from which zigzags lead to the *Col* (2 hrs.). The view from this point (9593 ft.) of the dark mountains to the W., bold in their forms, delicately marked with lacework of snow, and with long sweeping glaciers winding amongst them, is most striking and beautiful. The black *Mt. Miné* separates the glaciers of *Ferpècle* and *Miné*; farther W. are *Mt. Collon*, *Pigne d'Arolla*, *Mt. Blanc de Cheillon*, and *Grand Combin*. Directly N. rises the *Sassineire*, 10,692 ft., which can be ascended from the col in 1 hr.

The *Col de Torrent* was the scene of a murder on July 23, 1863. Herr Guensell, a Hanoverian lawyer of eminence, was the victim. The assassin was a well-known *mauvais sujet*, a Swiss Valaisan, who had once served in the Neapolitan army, and, having escaped from an imprisonment for forgery, had taken to the hills. Hearing that Herr Guensell was about to cross the pass with a single guide, he built a screen of stones by the side of the cross, and awaited them gun in hand. When they were twenty paces off the assassin began to fire. The guide fell severely wounded at once. Herr Guensell, also wounded, turned and ran down hill, but was pursued, overtaken, and shot. The murderer then remounted to the wounded guide, to despatch him, but was turned from his purpose by the man's entreaties. He even bound up his wounds, and helped him over the col, where he left him. Here some shepherds found him in a miserable state, and took him to *Gremenz*. The murderer was ultimately captured; but while being transferred to Berne, in charge of two old gendarmes, he made a sudden dash, and wholly escaped. The murderer and his brother were the only persons found implicated in the crime. The gendarmes were imprisoned for their carelessness.

The descent is down a broad and open alp by a well-marked track as far as a cattle-station (with a cross). From this point a traveller bears l., and soon finds a good path, which reaches the *Val d'Hérens* about  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. from the inn at

*Evolena* (Rte. 131) (2 hrs.).

b. The *Pas de Lona*, about 10 hrs., lies N. of the *Col de Torrent*, between the *Sasseneire* and *Bec de Bossons*. The descent by it to the *Val d'Hérens* is long, steep towards the bottom, and rather difficult to find after dark. The path ascends from *Gremenz* (2 hrs.) in zigzags to the upper pastures, where it turns sharp to the l., to get round the ridge descending from the *Bec de Bossons*. If a pedestrian should keep straight on (as the writer did), he will find himself on the wrong side of the *Bec*, but he can cross it by a bed of snow and rocks to the head of the pass. On the regular track a bare vale leads up to the *Col* ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.) 8926 ft., a wild and solitary spot, marked by a cross, and close under the *Bec de Bossons*, 10,368 ft. The topmost crags of this mountain are difficult to climb, but a point can be easily reached in  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr., from which there is a view of the entire range N. of the *Rhone* valley, as far as the *Finsteraarhorn*; of the *Weisshorn*, *Rothhorn*, *Gabelhorn*, *Dent Blanche* and *Grand Cornier*, E.; of *Mont Blanc*, and the bold *Pic d'Arzinol* over *Evolena*, W. The glacier of *Ferpècle*, *Mt. Collon*, &c., are shut out by the *Sasseneire*. The descent leads to the village of *Eison*, on the mountain-side high above the road of the *Val d'Hérens*, and thence, bearing l., through a gap in the precipices to the carriage-road of the *Val d'Hérens*, close to a little chapel,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from the *Col*, and  $\frac{3}{4}$  hr. from *Evolena*.

c. The *Col de Brema*, 9574 ft., S. of the *Col de Torrent*, is a pass of about 10 hrs., and, being nearer the main chain, commands a much finer view of the *Dent Blanche*, *Grand Cornier*, &c. The path leaves the *Val de Moiry* near the glacier,  $\frac{3}{4}$  hr. beyond the foot of the *Torrent Pass*, and is

steep and rough to the *Col*, which lies N. of the *Couronne de Bréona*, 10,382 ft. The descent by the Bréona Alp is easy. Farther S. is the

*Col de Moiry*, ascended from the glacier de Moiry (above the ice-fall) by rocks which are raked by falling stones. The descent on the other side, to the Ferpèche Glacier, is equally steep.

### ROUTE 131.

#### SION TO EVOLENA AND AROLLA — VAL D'HÉRENS. VAL D'HÉRÉMENCE.

| Sion.             | Hrs. |
|-------------------|------|
| Vex . . . . .     | 1½   |
| Useigne . . . . . | 1½   |
| Evolena . . . . . | 2½   |
| Arolla . . . . .  | 3½   |
| Total . . . . .   | 9    |

The inhabitants of this valley appear to be unusually well off, and their industry is shown by the height at which they cultivate their fields for corn.

There is a char-road to Evolena, along the W. side of the valley. Post carriage daily.

The road crosses the Rhone at Sion, and soon afterwards begin to ascend, keeping at a great height along the mountain slopes.

At a considerable height on the opposite side of the river is *Longeborgne*, a church and hermitage cut out of the rock, and inhabited by two monks. The lower valley is thickly peopled, and fertile. 1½ hr. the large village of Vex is passed. Soon afterwards the Val d'Hérémence opens on the l.

[*Val d'Hérémence* is a wild Alpine glen, some 15 m. (6½ hrs.) long, and contains in its upper portion many 'mayens,' but no permanent habitations. A car-road branches off at Vex. In 1 hr. the village of *Hérémence* is reached. Thence a bridle-road passing through several hamlets, ascends in 3 hrs. to the mayens of Pralong. [Hence the *Col de la Moigna* leads to Evolena in 5 hrs.] The

valley grows wilder, and the ascent is in parts steep to the chalets of La Barma (1½ hr.). Passes to Fionnay in Val de Bagnes (Rte. 136). An hour more brings the traveller to the chalets of *Liappey* (rough quarters) at the head of the valley. It is closed by two glaciers, and several fine peaks rise above them. The Glacier de Lendarey descends from Mt. Pleureur and the Glacier de Cheillon from Mt. Blanc de Cheillon. The passes over these are described in Rtes. 132 and 136. Owing to there being no inn at the head of Val d'Hérémence, mountaineers generally pass on by the Col de Riedmatten to good quarters at Arolla, and the neighbouring peaks are climbed either from that place or Mauvoisin. The Aiguilles Rouges, the highest summits in the range between the Arolla glen and Val d'Hérémence, are, perhaps, best attacked from the latter valley.]

Near Useigne, where the post halts, are some remarkable pillars of earth, called *Pyramides*, each topped by a flat stone, which by protecting the earth under it from the action of the rain has caused the phenomenon.

[½ hr. further, at a bridge over the Borgne, a second road (a mule-path) from Sion by the E. side of the valley falls in. It is ½ hr. longer, and passes through Bramois and Mage, and close to the hermitage of Longeborgne. The road is steep as far as St. Martin, after which it is tolerably level.]

There is a fine view from the Chapelle de la Garde, 1½ m. from

Evolena (*Inn*: H. de la Dent Blanche, good, and comfortable). This little village (4521 ft.), about 18 m. from Sion, stands at the lower end of a long level reach of the Val d'Hérens, with a beautiful view embracing the pyramidal *Dents de Veisivi* (11,237 ft.), which separate the branches which lead to the glaciers of Ferpèche and Arolla, the upper part of the Ferpèche Glacier, and the summit of the *Dent Blanche*. It is a fine Alpine landscape, and the peasants, who ride on mules and dress prettily, give life to it. The women wear a straw hat, a brown or

blue gown, black bodice and red kerchief, white sleeves and apron.

There are several guides here. Pierre Beytrison is recommended for glacier work. Jean Vuigner is a useful local guide. There is a tariff for guides and horses.

*Excursions—*

a. *Ferpèche Glacier*, a ride of about 2½ hrs., a walk of 2. The path does not cross the stream at Haudères, but ascends the E. bank—that on the W. stopping short of the glacier. The track passes in view of beautiful slopes and forests, and through a rich vegetation, including the oriental plane, and the currant and rose-tree growing wild. The valley terminates in a gorge, beyond which rise the cliffs of the *Ferpèche Glacier*. Here a new *Inn*, on the same scale as that at Arolla, has been lately opened. To appreciate the noble scenery of the *Ferpèche Glacier* it is necessary to mount to the chalet of the *Alp Bricolla*, 1½ hr. Immediately overhead rises the noble pyramid of the *Dent Blanche*; southwards spread the broad snow-fields leading to the *Col d'Hérens*. Below them the savage rocks of *Mont Mine*, separate the glacier of that name from that of *Ferpèche*. The glacier view is remarkable for extent and beauty.

b. The *Pic d'Arzino*, W. of Evolena, in the ridge dividing Val d'Hérens and Val d'Héremence, can be ascended in 4 hrs. Mules can go 2½ hrs., to a point from which the top is 1½ hr. The great features of the view are the Matterhorn and *Dent Blanche*.

c. A much higher point of the same range is the *Pointe de Youasson* (11,476 ft.), an expedition of 8 or 9 hrs. It commands one of the finest panoramic views in the whole district, and is well worth a visit. The descent may be varied by returning by the *Lac Bleu*, a charming little tarn in the Arolla valley, near *Satarme*. It may also be taken on the way to Arolla, by following an easy route skirting the base of the remarkable *Aiguilles Rouges* (11,916 ft.) [of

which an ascent, perilous from the disintegration of the rocks, has been made on this side], and the lower end of the *Glacier des Ignes*, to the beautiful *Alp de Praz-gras*.

d. The *Couronne de Bréona*, N. of the *Col de Torrent*, commands a fine panoramic view. As the ascent is somewhat monotonous, this summit is best taken on the way to Val d'Anniviers.

e. The *Dent Blanche*, 14,318 ft., was first ascended, 1862, by Messrs. T. S. Kennedy and Wigram, in spite of driving mist and snow, and a temp. of 20° Fahr. From the *Bricolla Alp* and back they were 16 hrs., 10 on the steep and very difficult arête. No mountain in the Alps varies more in difficulty than this. Late in a fine season, when the rock face is bare of snow, it is comparatively easy. When the face is icy, it is one of the most laborious and formidable ascents known.

[For the passes from Evolena to Zermatt, Zinal, and Val d'Héremence, see also Rtes. 130 and 132.]

From Evolena it is a walk along a mule-track of about 9 m. (3½ hrs.) to the inn at Arolla.

Looking back from the path to Haudères, the *Diablerets*, and its long sloping glacier of *Sandfeuron*, are seen beyond the valley of the Rhone. At Haudères (2½ m.), where the valley divides, the track crosses the stream from the *Ferpèche glacier*, and rounding the foot of the *Pte. Dent de Veisivi*, enters the *Val*, or *Combe* (as it is called) *de l'Arolla*, crossing its stream to the W. bank. A rapid ascent up the fir-woods brings the traveller to the *Chapel of St. Barthélemi* (2½ m.), close to an enormous rock, one of many which have rolled down the mountain side. This is a romantic spot—a turfy knoll, surrounded by arolla pines, and opposite the precipices of the *Dents de Veisivi* and *Dent Ferroc*. On each side the valley is shut in by steep forest and rocks. Higher up, at the chalets of *Satarme*, it opens, and here, to the rt., are the *Cascade des Ignes* and the *Lac Bleu* (in *patois*, *Gouille*

*Pau*). The scene grows wilder and the path less distinct on the approach to the *moyens* (6450 ft.) and *Inn* of Arolla (H. du Mont Collon, a fair mountain inn; Jean Anzevui, the landlord, a guide for the district). This house is the last in the valley, and close to a waste of *débris* which extends for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. to the *Arolla Glacier*. The situation is striking. The view, from the hotel door, of Mont Collon (11,956 ft.), filling up the vista of the Arolla glacier (L'Evêque, 12,264 ft., is just seen to its rt.), is one of the most perfect of its kind in the Alps. More to the right rises the snow dome of the Pigne d'Arolla (12,471 ft.), flanked on either side by massive precipices; while to the E., immediately above the hotel, the eye singles out from the jagged ridge of the Grandes Dents which lines the *Combe*, a sharp and slender point—the Aiguille de la Za (12,051 ft.). Another summit of the same ridge, the Dent Perroc (11,992 ft.), is seen more to the N.; and between the two may be noticed some gracefully curved strata in the gneiss rocks. The range of which the Grandes Dents form part is one of the most marked features of the district, separating the basin into which the various Arolla glaciers stream from the large snow-field which feeds the glaciers of Miné and Ferpècle. It runs N. from the Dents des Bouquetins (12,625 ft.), on the main watershed of the Alps, and includes in order the Dents de Bertol, Grandes Dents (Za, Perroc), and Petites Dents, or Dents de Veisivi, which form its northern termination. While few mountain inns can have so many glaciers in their immediate proximity, a pleasing contrast to rock and ice is afforded by the graceful *Arolla* pines, which still characterise the locality to which they gave their name; and the glades in the remains of the forest above the hotel offer beautiful walks.

Arolla has lately become a favourite halting-place, and it is a centre for innumerable excursions and glacier passes.

*Excursions*.—Besides the walks, up the even lower Arolla glacier, to the

Pas de Chèvres, the dolomitic Mt. Dollin, by the beautiful Praz-gras Alp to the Lac Bleu; the following (with guides, rope, and *early start*) are recommended for active men as interesting and easy mountain excursions, combining a variety of fine views:—  
*a.* Ascend to Col de Mt. Brulé. *b.* Ascend to ridge of *Grandes Dents*, by route to Aig. de la Za (below), then along ridge to rt. to S. summit (11,903 ft.). Magnificent views. Descend easy S.E. arête to head of N. Glacier de Bertol (rope). *c.* *Circuit of Mt. Collon*. From Col de Pièce (3½ hrs.) pass over snow plain between Petit Mt. Collon and L'Evêque to Col de l'Evêque, S. of the latter. Descend slightly N. of E. to Col de Collon ( $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from Col d'Evêque).

#### Of the ascents

*a.* The *Pigne d'Arolla*, 12,471 ft., is to be preferred. It is one of the finest points of view in the Alps, and is easily reached by 2 routes.

By the *Glacier de Pièce* (shortest 5-5½ hrs., best for several reasons for the *ascent*). By long sweeping moraines, not bad in ascent, to Glacier de Pièce. This is much crevassed. In the morning, when in good condition, it may be ascended by a direct course to the ridge (3½ hrs.) at the head overlooking the snow plain between the Vuibez and Otemme Glaciers, over which lies the Col de Chermontane. [Descent has to be made by the left edge of the glacier, or by the Vuibez rocks to Arolla Glacier.] Skirt S.W. for a short way, and then ascend snow slopes direct to top (about 1½ hr.).

By *Glacier de Cheillon* (about 6½ hrs. up, and 4, or less, down; best for the *descent*).

Crossing the *Pas de Chèvres* (2½ hrs.), and after a short ascent of the glacier d'Héremence, turning l. up loose rocks to the snow, a point is reached at the head of the *Glacier de Cijorenove* (2 hrs.) [properly *Zigjorenovo*, i.e. "new chalets"] immediately S. of the Zinarettian rocks. [This point may also be reached on the Arolla side by these rocks; but

without local guidance they have been found difficult.] Above this a slope of névé is climbed S. towards the Col de Breney, and then easy gradients lead E., and finally N.E., to the summit. Here the traveller not only enjoys a view of nearly all the great peaks round Zermatt, and to the W. of it, but finds himself in the centre of 3 snowy ranges. He stands on the main chain, and sees to the S. the long white line of the Cogne mountains, to the N. that of the Oberland and its continuation E. and W. Far to the N. is the distant blue of the Jura, and on the shoulder of the Dent du Midi, like a bead, a little bit of the lake of Geneva.

An excellent view is obtained of the range separating the Otemma glacier and the Valpelline, conspicuous in which are the Evêque (12,264 ft.) and the Béc de Blancien (12,146 ft.). The sea of hills by the lower ends of the glaciers of Otemma and Breney is peculiarly beautiful: the dark pyramid of the Pte. d'Otemma filling up the gap of the Col de Fenêtre between the Avril (rt.) and the Gelé (l.), marks the S.W. end of the ridge separating the 2 glaciers, the other end being the Pigne itself. Between the Pigne and the still higher Mt. Blanc de Cheillon (12,700 ft.) lie the 2 cols of Breney (nearest and l.) and Serpentine. The highest point of Monte Rosa is seen just to l. of Dt. d'Hérens, Mt. Blanc to rt. of the Gr. Combin. (See panorama in 'Alpine Journal,' vol. viii.)

The *Mont Collon* (11,956 ft.) is a more difficult climb, but made from the ridge above the Vuibez ice-fall. It requires great care, from the looseness of the rocks, and is only fit for practised climbers.

*Pointe de Vorasson.* Very easy. Much recommended. (See above.)

*Dents des Bouquetins* (12,625 ft.), the highest of the Arolla mountains. Of about the same difficulty as Mont Collon, but, safer, and commanding finer views. From Col de Bertol to rt., along base of cliffs, strike up rocks obliquely before coming to Col des Bouquetins, and ascend by

shoulder coming down from a point on the main ridge N. of summit. Has been done in about 6 hrs. up and 5 down.

*Aiguille de la Za.* Easy except final peak ( $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.), which requires a good head. The best route (safer than the gullies on either side) is to ascend directly above the hotel to a gap in Maja ridge above the Glacier de *Dauva Blantz*. Skirt this, and ascend arête on S. side to ridge of Grandes Dents S. of the summit (12,015 ft.) above the arête: descend N.E. to névé at foot (under 5 hrs.) of Aiguille. Return by névé and N. branch of Bertol glacier. Active walkers may reach Zermatt from the foot of the Aiguille by traversing S.S.E. the nearly level plain of névé to gap in ridge running E. from the head of the Bertol Glacier, and descending easy slope to route for Col d'Hérens (1 hr. from ft. of Aig.).

*Mt. Brulé* (11,880 ft.), worth a visit for a view of remarkable beauty. Has been ascended from Col de Collon, and on the E., without much difficulty, from the Col de Zardezan.

*Passes from Arolla. To Zermatt, see Route 133.*

*To the Val de Bagnes.* a. By the *Col de Chernmontane*, 9 hrs., from Arolla to Mauvoisin. The chief difficulty is the ascent of the ice-fall of the *Vuibez Glacier*, and the rocks on its l. are sometimes preferred. The alternative way by the Glacier de Pièce avoids this (see under *Pigne d'Arolla*). The *Col* 10,118 ft., is a plain of névé, between the Pigne d'Arolla and Petit Mt. Collon (11,631 ft.), itself an island in snow. The bounding range on the E. has 3 summits: N. and lowest (11,956 ft.) Mt. Collon, whose impressive N. façade is now lost; S. and highest (12,264 ft.) L'Evêque [the mitre-like appearance to which the name is due is distinct in the middle summit seen from the N.] On the S.W., the long incline of the beautiful *Otemma Glacier*, about 6 m. in length by  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. in breadth, with a surface smooth and of unsullied whiteness, appears to be prolonged by the *Glacier de Fenêtre*, which rises to the Col de

Fenêtre, between Mont Avril, N., and Mt. Gelé, S. On the l. of it runs the Italian watershed. The descent lies along the glacier, with view of the Combin, and in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. reaches the alp and *chalet* of *Chanrion* (a hovel with 2 mattresses for travellers). From this point to the little inn at Mauvoisin is 2 hrs.

b. By the *Col de l'Erêque*, W. of l'Evêque, a circuitous but very interesting glacier route, 13 hrs. to Mauvoisin.

c. By the *Col de Cheillon* and *Col de Gétroz*. The most direct way to Mauvoisin. Easy. ( $6-6\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.) The path mounts to the *chalets* of Arolla, above which the slopes end in a low precipice overlooking the Cheillon glacier ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.). Down this a very narrow shelving ledge forms the *Pas de Chèvres* (9354 ft.). This may be avoided by crossing the parallel *Col de Riedmatten*, some 200 ft. higher, directly rt., and with a path by which mules descend into the Val d'Héremence. The way then lies S.W., up the W. branch of the *Glacier de Cheillon*, to the *Col de Cheillon* (10,663 ft.,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr.), on the watershed between the valleys of Bagnes and Héremence, immediately N.W. of *Mont Blanc de Cheillon*, 12,700 ft. This peak, higher than any of the Arolla mountains, is well seen on the route [properly *Sëilon* = in *patois*, *milkpail*, from the alp below, said to have been once so rich that every cow filled her milkpail]. The level *névé* of the *Glacier de Gétroz* is then traversed (slightly N. of E.) to a pass opposite Mt. Pleureur (12,159 ft.) and above the opening through which the glacier escapes in a long and steep icefall. The descent lies (rather l.) over shale and grass slopes to the *chalets* of Gétroz, whence is a path l., and then rt. below, the cliffs to a bridge a little above Mauvoisin. The icefall (for the catastrophe caused by this glacier, see Rte 136) is seen by a détour.

This pass and the *Col de Collon* are little harder than the *Théodule*, but both involve more *crevasses*. On the E. side of the *Col de Cheillon*, in

1874 the local guide of a party wished to dispense with the rope, on the ground of there being no *crevasses*. The more experienced guide, however, insisted on it, and soon fell bodily into a concealed *crevasse*, being only held up by the rope. The rope should never be neglected on *névé*.

The older route turned l. from the *Col de Cheillon* to the *Col du Mont Rouge*, 10,958 ft. The view is exceedingly fine. The descent is to the small ice-field of *Lire Rouge*, along this below the rocks of the *Ruinette* to its termination, and then in a slanting direction, N.N.W., to Gétroz.

d. By *Col de Brency*. See Rte. 136.

### ROUTE 132. \*

AOSTA TO AROLLA, BY THE VALPELLINE LINE AND COL DE COLLON—GLACIER PASSES FROM THE VALPELLINE.

| Aosta.               | Hrs. |
|----------------------|------|
| Valpelline . . . . . | 2½   |
| Oyace . . . . .      | 1½   |
| Preraye . . . . .    | 5    |
| Arolla . . . . .     | 6½   |

This is a fine expedition; but the walk to Prerayen is long and tedious, and provisions should be taken for 2 days, there being no inns above Valpelline, where the carriage-road ends. Even here there is none at which a traveller would care to pass a night. The head of the Valpelline is wild and grand, closed by the fine ice-fall of the *Glacier de Zardezan*, and the *Dent d'Hérens* (called here *Dent du Rong*). Those who cross from Arolla can return to the Val de Bagnes by the *Col de Crête Sèche* or the *Col d'Olen* (sometimes termed *de la Reuse d'Arolla*), or to Zermatt by the *Col de la Valpelline*.

The road is same as that to the St. Bernard route (Rte. 135) for a short distance; it then crosses the St. Bernard branch of the river Buttier at a beautiful spot, and proceeds between fields to *Valpelline*,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs., a village with important copper works (*H. des Mines*). Here the mule-path to V. de Bagnes branches off (Rte. 136).

The valley narrows, and the ascent becomes rapid. Several hamlets shaded by walnuts are passed before reaching *Oyace*, on a barrier of syenite (1 hr. 40 min.), the traveller reaches in 1½ hour *Bionnaz* (5960 ft.) Here the curé will entertain travellers.

[The *Col de Crête Sèche*, 9475 ft., between *Mt. Gelé* and the *Trouma des Boncs*, is about 3 hrs. from *Bionnaz* by rocks and snow-slopes. The descent to the *Otemma glacier* is by the *Glacier de Crête Sèche*, which is much crevassed (3 hrs. down to *Chanrion*, 5 to *Mauvoisin*, in *Val de Bagnes*). *Mont Gelé*, 11,539 ft., can be ascended from this col by the rocks l., the *Glacier de la Balme*, and snow to the top, and

Several passes cross into the unfrequented *Val de Barthélemi*. The easiest is the *Col de Vessona* (8600 ft.), by which the village of *St. Barthélemi* 2 hrs. from *Nus* in *Val d'Aosta* is reached in 5 hrs. from *Oyace*. Mountaineers will prefer the *Col de Lusency* passing to the W. of the beautiful *Becca de Lusency* (12,350 ft.), which can be climbed from the pass and commands a noble view.]

In 3¼ hours more the *Prerayen Alp* (6590 ft.) is reached, by (total from *Aosta*) 3¼ hours of rapid ascent. There is a good horse-road. Here the chalets afford somewhat better quarters than most of those in *Piedmont*, but the owner is exacting. A small inn is much wanted.

From this point the track to the *Col de Collon* lies up a wild lateral valley, the *Combe d'Olen*. It is nearly an hour's walk to the foot of the moraine. The *Glacier de Collon*, which is at the N.E. side of the valley, the *Glacier* and *Col d'Olen* being its head, has retreated a good half-mile during the last thirty years. There are two routes to the upper plateau; one over rocks, which is usually the preferable course, the other following the bottom of the valley to the foot of the glacier. This having been climbed, the traveller soon reaches a broad plain of *névé*, whence two or three long slopes lead to the *col*, 10,269 ft. above the sea.

[*Switz.*]

To the l., on a crest of rocks, is a small iron cross, dated 1754. The precipices of *L'Evêque* (12,264 ft.) appear towards the l., with the short snow slope leading to the *Col de l'Evêque* to its S., by which the *Otemma glacier* is reached.

The descent towards *Arolla* is easy, but the *Arolla Glacier* is much crevassed, and, from its extent, a traveller might be exposed to risk in bad weather. A party of villagers from *Evolena* were here overtaken by a tourmente, lost their way, and 3 perished in the snow. Professor *Forbes*, in 1841, found one of the skeletons. The broad level snow-field at the head of the glacier is known by the name of *Za de Zan* [*za* = the part of an alp where the pasturage is common]. It was by a gully on this side that the first ascent of *Mont Collon* (11,956 ft.) was made by *Mr. G. E. Foster* in 1867. Further down the mountain rises sheer from the ice in a dark wall, which returns a fine echo. Opposite is seen a grand feature of the pass—the triple *Dents des Bouquetins* (12,625 ft.), the highest of the *Arolla mountains*. The glacier sweeps boldly round the base of *Mt. Collon*, breaking in an ice-fall, where the descent lies down the moraine or ice on the l. bank. Opposite are the séracs of the steep *Vuibez Glacier*. The rest of the way to the foot of the *Arolla glacier*, ¼ m. from the *Inn* at *Arolla*, is a level walk amid grand scenery. In front, over the *Arolla Alp*, appear the pointed *Aiguilles Rouges* (11,916 ft.). An interesting drawing by Professor *Forbes* shows the greater height of the glacier in 1845. In a favourable state of the snow it takes 4 hrs. to ascend from *Prerayen* or *Arolla*, 2½ hrs. to descend—total 6½ hrs.

The *Col de Zardezan* is an alternative but little-used route to *Prerayen*. The pass lies to the S. of the *Col de Mt. Brulé* (see p. 40), and reaches the *Zardezan Gl.* below its great ice-fall.

[From the head of the *Valpelline*  
2 D

are several other passes to the adjoining valleys. To Val S. Barthélemi, besides the *Col de Vessoney* (see *ante*), the *Passage de Montagnai* from Puillay; *Pas de Levornea* from Prerayen. To Val Tournanche the *Col de Val Cornière* (Rte. 128) from Prerayen.

The *Col d'Olen* (sometimes called *de la Reuse d'Arolla*) is a fine, easy and short ice-pass from Prerayen to Val de Bagnes. The ascent lies through the Combe d'Olen to the l. of the Collon route. The front slope on the W. side is steep, and sometimes protected by a bergschrund. The descent of the Chermontane glacier is easy. 8 hrs.

To Zermatt from Prerayen the

*Col de Valpelline*, a most useful and magnificent pass, discovered by Mr. Jacombin 1860, 10 hrs. (5 up, 5 down.) The ascent lies on the *Zardezan Glacier* as far as the ice-fall, and then N.E. by rocks and a couloir to the névé. The *Col* (11,687 ft.) lies just under the *Tête Blanche* N.W., 12,304 ft., which Mr. Jacomb ascended by the way in 1 hr. [Bearing to the l., a traveller can cross the *Col des Bouquetins* to Evolena, over the ridge connecting the *Tête Blanche* with Mt. Miné, and by the *Ferpècle glacier*; or can pass to Arolla by the *Col de Mont Brulé*.] The descent to the Zmutt glacier is by a slope of névé, the rte. falling into that of the *Col d'Hérens* a little above the Stockje.

The *Dent d'Hérens* (13,714 ft.) was first climbed 1863 by an English party, by the Zardezan glacier and difficult W. arête. It is not an easy expedition.

### ROUTE 133.

EVOLENA OR AROLLA TO ZERMATT,  
GLACIER PASSES.

(a) The *Col d'Hérens* is a grand pass, over one of the noblest glaciers in the Alps, and with a near and commanding view of the Matterhorn.

Forbes crossed this pass in 1841. At that time it was little known, although tradition and early writers point to a time when it had been commonly used. For its full enjoyment 14 or 16 hrs. should be allowed, although the actual walking, when the snow is in good order, can be done in 11, or even less. The journey may be shortened by sleeping at the new inn at the foot of the *Ferpècle glacier* or at the Stockje hut.

A steep track, skirting precipices, leads from the foot of the glacier to the chalets of *Alp Bricolla*, about 3½ hrs. from Evolena. They are situated on a grassy shelf, several hundred feet above the glacier, and command a splendid view of the glittering snow-fields, of the jagged line of the Dents de Bertol and Grandes Dents, and of the Mt. Miné ridge, which extends to the *Tête Blanche*. Here travellers generally sleep, for the ascent of the *Dent Blanche*, or for the passage of the fine *Col du Grand Cornier* (Rte. 130) leading N. of it to Zinal. From this point the traveller passes over heaps of debris for about 1 hr., and then across the lateral moraine to the glacier, which here breaks over a rock called the *Motta Rotta*. This at first is steep, but the upper snow-fields, under ordinary circumstances, present no difficulty, rising eastward in gentle slopes to an undulating line thrown out against the sky. This is part of a vast snow plateau falling from the shoulders of the *Tête Blanche*, and lying between the ridges which culminate respectively in the Dents des Bouquetins and the *Dent Blanche*. Passes lead from it in all directions, and it is notoriously perplexing in a mist: in bad weather one pass has been mistaken for another, and a night has even been passed on it in a snow-hut made by the guide. The level of the Zmutt glacier is considerably lower than that of the *Ferpècle*, and from the snowy rim drop the precipices of the *Windfuh*, which are so well seen from the Riffel, a ridge connecting the *Dent Blanche* with the *Tête Blanche*. The *Col*, 11,418 ft., lies towards its S.W. end, under the *Tête*

Blanche, 12,304 ft. To the N. is the Dent Blanche; to the S.E. the Dent d'Hérens; but the grandest feature of the pass is the Matterhorn. It is barely 4 m. distant, and its long northern precipices and W. arête are seen in profile. To gain a more extensive prospect, a traveller may ascend the *Tête Blanche*, on the rt., a grand point of view, and one of the most easily accessible in the Alps.

The descent from the col down a curtain of snow and black rocks, with often a bergschrund at the bottom, though steep, is not generally found difficult. Below it the Zmutt glacier is considerably broken. Taking a wide sweep to avoid the crevasses, the track descends to the *Stockje*, a projecting island of rock, connected by a ridge with the Dent d'Hérens, and thus holding up this upper glacier. The way lies down the rocks, which are easy, and, for the most part, slopes of shale. A substantial two-roomed hut has been built on them by the Swiss Alpine Club (1½ hr.). Below the *Stockje* the glacier begins to don that coat of moraine which so completely disguises it lower down. The stones, says Forbes, come from many quarters, and with a prodigious volume. Those from the *Stockje* are of a deep red colour. The traveller keeps to the glacier until the Matterhorn glacier is left well behind. Then quitting the now disagreeable ground for the rt. bank he soon reaches the pine-woods and descends through the beautiful valley of Zmutt, in about 3 hrs., to

Zermatt (Rte. 128).

(b) *Col de Bertol*, the ordinary pass from Arolla. The ascent lies up the glacier to a point a short way past the gorge of the Bertol torrent, and then by a short scramble up steep shale and grass to more level ground near the Plan de Bertol. The S. branch of the glacier is ascended to the Col (about 10,800 ft.?), between a small mass of rock (l.) and one of the Dents de Bertol (11,142 ft.). It is reached in ¾-4 hrs. from Arolla. The *Col d'Hérens* is not visible, lying just to the l. of the Matterhorn.

From this col, to rt. at first, in 2-2½ hrs. over the above-described plateau, the *Col d'Hérens* is reached. Time (easy), about 10½ hrs: [but may be done in less: thus, in the reverse, good time is Zermatt to hut 4½: 1st col 1½, 2nd col 1½, Arolla 2—total 9½].

The Col d'Hérens may be avoided by taking a passage higher up the slopes of the *Tête Blanche*. Descent by a snow slope to route from Col de Valpelline.

(c) *Col du Mont Brûlé*. This fine and useful pass, giving greater variety of views, takes 12 or 13 hrs. The ascent lies up the glacier of Arolla, and then l. over the large snow-field called *Za de Zan*. In 6 hrs. the Col du Mont Brûlé (10,400 ft.) is reached. It commands magnificent views. The way then turns to the N.E., and falls into the route of the Col de Valpelline, near the top of that pass.

This pass is also connected with the Otemma glacier by the *Col de l'Evêque*, S. of L'Evêque, reached from the Col de Collon after crossing the *Za de Zan*. There is thus a direct passage from Zermatt to Chermontane over nearly continuous and undulating snow-fields, and it may be made in ignorance that 4 separate watersheds are traversed.

Other ways have been forced across the glaciers, but these two seem the preferable routes.

Evolena to Aosta by the Col de Collon (Rte. 132).

## ROUTE 134.

TURIN TO AOSTA AND COURMAYEUR, BY  
IVREA—THE VAL D'AOSTA.

| Turin.             | Kil.      | Eng. m. |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| Chivasso           | { 22 = 14 |         |
| Ivrea              | { 32 = 20 |         |
| Donas . . . .      | 20 = 12   |         |
| Châtillon . . . .  | 24 = 15   |         |
| Aosta . . . .      | 24 = 15   |         |
| Courmayeur . . . . | 41 = 25   |         |

The journey from Turin to Cour-  
2 D 2

mayeur may be made in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  day, sleeping at Aosta, or in 1 very long day.

*Railways* from Turin to Ivrea. A continuation to Aosta is talked of.

At *Chivasso* Junct. Stat., a town of some 8000 Inhab., the main line from Turin to Novara is left, and a branch goes to

*Caluso* Stat.

[From Caluso an excursion may be made to *Biella* (Rte. 124.)]

*Ivrea* Stat. (*Inns*: H. de l'Europe, good cuisine, moderate charges; Lion d'Or) is a large walled town of about 8000 Inhab. at the entrance of the Val d'Aosta. The approach to it is picturesque, across the deep bed of the Doire, which flows below the *Porte de Turin*. Here large markets are held, to which cheese and other pastoral produce of the Alps are brought. The town is also a depot for the iron obtained near Cogne, and from other mines worked in the valley. It has some small *cotton-works*.

There is an interesting *old Castle*, degraded into a prison, and disfigured with modern windows, &c. The battlements and machicolations of two of its towers remain. These, and the walls, from many points of view, furnish good materials for the sketch-book. The small isolated hills scattered along the sides of the stream, and often crowned by some crumb of a wall of a feudal castle, are pretty features of a wooded landscape which has the Alps for background. This town, or city, as it is called—as the seat of a bishop—is the southern gate to the Val d'Aosta. It is of great antiquity, and mentioned by many ancient authors under the name of *Eporédia*. Strabo says that when the brave people of the Val d'Aosta were subdued, the unfortunate Salassi, made prisoners by Terentius Varro, were here sold as slaves by public auction to the number of 36,000. The Marquis of Ivrea was in the middle ages a powerful potentate.

The rly. ends at Ivrea, but there is a good carriage-road as far as Courmayeur.

[W. of Ivrea is the opening of Val

*Chiusella*, a picturesque valley with ravines and waterfalls. There is a carriage-road as far as (20 m.) Traversella (poor *Inns*), whence passes lead over the mountains to Val de Champorcher.

E. lie the hospice of Graglia (3 hrs.), and Biella ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.).]

*Diligences*, slow but cheap, to Aosta, Pré St. Didier, and Courmayeur.

The Val d'Aosta is one of the most beautiful valleys in the Alps. Yet between Ivrea to Courmayeur it has but few tolerable *Inns*, excepting the excellent H. du Mt. Blanc at Aosta. The best are at Pont St. Martin and St. Vincent. The language of the valley is a French patois. The Abbé Gorret and the Baron Claude Bich, have lately published a very complete 'Guide de la Vallée d'Aoste,' and for the lower portion the Handbook of the Ivrean branch of the Alpine Club is useful.

On leaving Ivrea, on the rt. is a vast ridge of alluvium, the Monte Bolegno, which stretches into the plains. The road ascends on the left bank of the Doire, passes below the *old Castle of Montalto*, well preserved and picturesque in form, and continues through the rich broad valley of the Doire—broad enough to constitute a part of the plain, for at *Settimo Vittone*,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  leagues, the ascent has been so gradual as scarcely to have been perceived. Nor is it, in fact, until the traveller reaches

*Pont St. Martin* (*Inns*: Mt. Rose; Rosa Rossa, clean and fair) that he may be said to have entered this valley of the Alps.

The situation of Pont St. Martin is strikingly fine at the entrance to the Val de Lys, which runs up to the glaciers of the Lyskamm and Monte Rosa (Rte. 123).

The lofty arch spanning the Lys (about 20 yards higher than the new bridge) is one of the finest Roman works of its class in the valley: it now serves as a passage to the Val de Lys, the road to Aosta being carried over a modern bridge. Above St. Martin are ruins of a large *Castle*.

After crossing the Lys, at a short

distance from its confluence with the Doire, the road ascends to

*Donas*, where a Roman work—a pierced rock—is passed through, and near it is a Roman milestone cut in the rock, noting xxxii. MP. A tolerable *wine* is grown here.

From *Donas* the road mounts high above the *Doire* to

*Fort Bard* (*Inn*: Sole, poor and dirty), celebrated for the check of 8 days which it gave to the advance of the French army under Buonaparte, in 1800. At that time the road ran through the town under the fort. It was garrisoned by only 400 Austrians, yet such was the strength of the position that Buonaparte almost despaired of carrying it, and a few days more must have starved his army into a retreat. But this was averted by a skilful manœuvre. By placing a gun above the precipices of the *Mont Albaredo*, the French checked the battery which covered the approach to the town, and the army passed by night, dragging their cannon through the street laid with straw to prevent the noise alarming the garrison. Another gun was then raised to a belfry which commanded the gate of the fort; and the Austrians, fearing an assault, surrendered. Upon such slight occurrences the fate of Europe turned. As the French army would have devoured all the supply of the *Val d'Aosta* in a few days, it must have retreated; and the battle of *Marengo*, one of the most brilliant events of French history, would not have occurred. The fort has been greatly strengthened, and it is now considered impregnable.

The modern road goes round the rock, avoiding the steep and narrow street of *Bard*. [It opens out the valley of *Champorcher*, through which a path leads, by the village of *Pont Bosel*, to the *Col de Champorcher*, in 6 hrs., and by the *Val Soana* to *Ponte* in *Val d'Orco* (*Rte. 146*). From the chapel of *Notre Dame de la Neige*, at the head of the valley, there is a path by the *Fenêtre de Coigne* direct to *Cogne*, 10 hrs. from *Fort Bard*.]

"The geologist should not fail to examine the hills, which appear to enclose the mouth of the valley below the town. They are the gigantic moraines of a glacier which once united the separate ice-streams that flowed from each lateral valley of the Pennine and Graian Alps into the *Val d'Aosta*."—*Bull.*

The view looking back upon this fortress is a perfect picture, not to be surpassed in its kind.

Above *Bard* the main valley is narrow, and offers little variety in ascending by the deep and rapid course of the *Doire* to

*Verrex* (*Inn*: *Ecu de France*—extortion; *Couronne*),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  leagues from *Pont St. Martin*, situated at the entrance to the *Val Challant* (*Rte. 125*). Here many improvements have been made, especially in the construction of a new bridge and new houses.

The large square keep of the *old Castle* overhangs the *Val Challant*. It is a picturesque object from below, and the view from it is worth a scramble. There is a convent of *Augustines*.

Above *Verrex* the valley widens, and the little plain of the *Doire* covered with sand and stones shows the occasional violence of the torrent.

About  $1\frac{1}{2}$  league beyond *Verrex* the road enters a remarkable scene—a deep ravine, through which the *Doire* has wormed a way, or found in such a gulf its natural channel. The road ascends steeply left of the river, and is cut out of the rock, in some places overhanging the foaming torrent. Above it are the ruins of the *Castle of St. Germain*, placed so as to command the pass.

This road—called the pass of *Mont Jovet*—was probably a Roman work, though a modern inscribed tablet denies them the credit. It was repaired by the inhabitants of *Aosta*. The wine in its neighbourhood is celebrated. From the head of the pass the view down the valley is very striking. Towards the W. the finest part of the *Val d'Aosta* extends to the *Cité*, as *Aosta* is called,

Before arriving at St. Vincent, a singular bridge over a ravine is crossed. It is called the *Pont des Sarrasins*, and by antiquaries is recognised as a Roman work. From its parapet one of the most beautiful scenes in the valley is presented on looking towards Châtillon, including among its objects the Château d'Ussel and other ruins. Not far from this bridge is the village of

*St. Vincent* (*Inns*: Ecu de France; Succursale of the Lion d'Or, with good accommodation, far better than at Châtillon). Here is a *Bath-house*, supplied from a mineral spring in the chestnut-forest above, on the path to the *Col de Jon*, Brissone, and Gressoney.  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour's walk is the dirty but beautifully situated town of

*Châtillon* (1740 ft.) (*Inns*: H. de Londres; Lion d'Or, fair accommodation and food, but untrustworthy people). The bridge over which the high road now passes in a fine single arch, thrown across a deep gulf. From it are seen, further down the torrent, the remains of a *Roman bridge*, also a single, and still an entire arch; and immediately over it another bridge, now superseded.

In the depth of the gulf, and a little up the stream, are forges, strangely placed there, for the sake of the water-power in working the tilts; a wild path leads down to them, and the view of the bridges from the bottom of the ravine forms a striking scene.

[Here is the opening of the Val Tournanche and the path to the Col de St. Théodule (Rte. 128). To Val Tournanche  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hrs., mule 10 fr.; to Breuil 7 hrs., mule 15 fr. Guide to Zermatt 20 fr. A carriage-road in construction to Val Tournanche.]

To see Châtillon and the beauties of its valley to advantage, a stranger should walk to a plateau called *Veintin*, on the opposite side of the Doire, where the ruin of *Château d'Ussel* (14th cent.) rises in the foreground.

1-horse or 2-horse carriage to Aosta, 15, 25 fr.; to Ivrea, 25, 40.

Above Châtillon the same rich scenery prevails, interrupted here and

there by traces of destruction, caused by torrents at times.

About a league above Châtillon is *Chambave*, celebrated for its wine, one of the richest in Piedmont. The vineyards of the Val d'Aosta have a great reputation, and are cultivated on the mountains to an elevation of 3000 ft. above the sea. Hemp, Indian corn, and fruit-trees fill the valley like a garden.

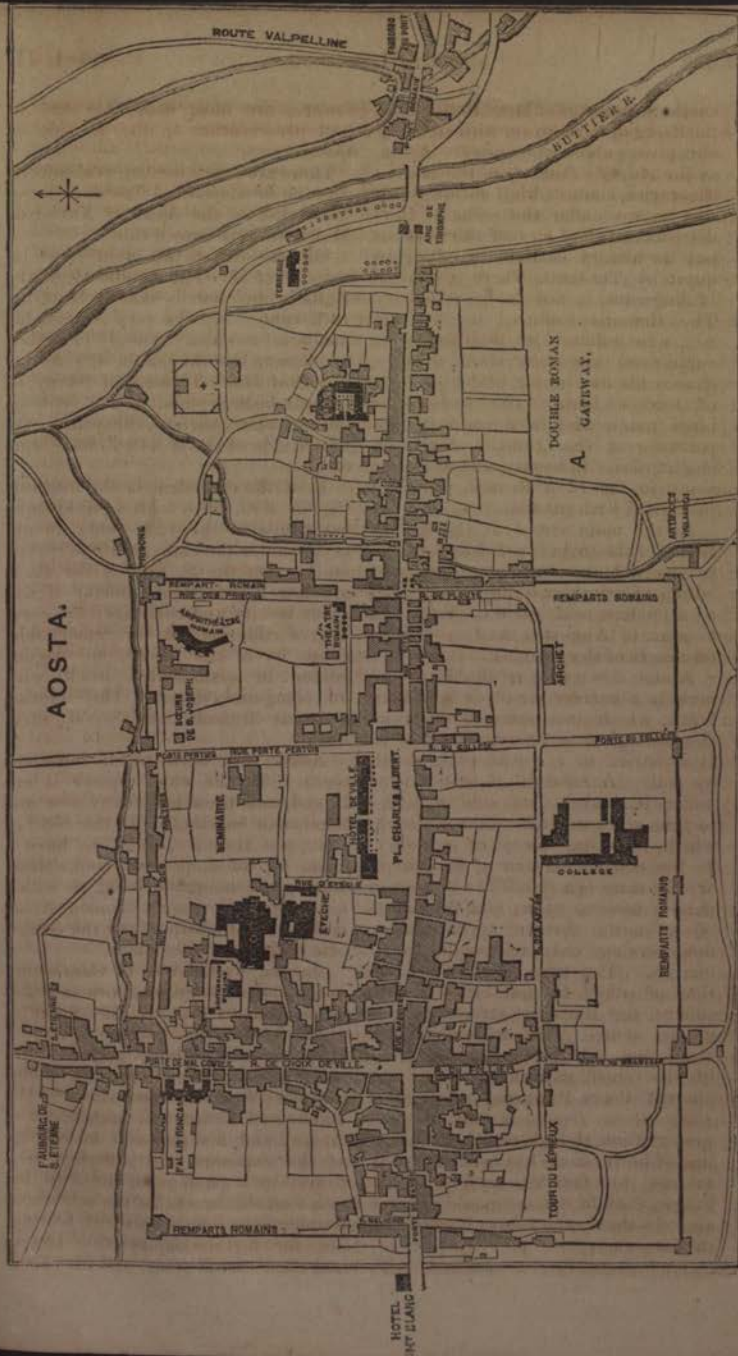
*Nus*, a poor village with the ruins of a château, is nearly half-way between Châtillon and Aosta. At the entrance of the Val S. Barthélemi is the picturesque castle of Fenis.

[Three passes lead from the Val S. Barthélemi to the Valpellina. The least difficult is the *Col de Vessou* to Oyace (Rte. 132). An easy pass, called the *Fenêtre de S. Barthélemi*, goes from the village of the same name to Antey in Valtournanche. There is no *Inn* at S. Barthélemi, but the curé will receive strangers.]

Near *St. Marcel* are copper-mines, and the remarkable *Fontaine Bleue*, impregnated with copper.

On the approach to Aosta the *Château Quart* is seen high on the mountain side; a path leads to it from near Villefranche, and down on the other side to Aosta, so that a visit requires no retracing of steps, and beautiful scenes are presented on the ascent and at the château, which is now a Hospital. Little more than a league further up the valley is

*AOSTA* (1910 ft.) (*Inns*: H. du Mont Blanc, kept by the family of J. Tairraz, of Chamonix, excellent, in a charming situation immediately outside the town; Couronne, improved; Ecu du Valais), a city of 7700 Inhab.; of small importance in trade, wealth, or population, but attractive to a stranger. Its situation is most striking, in a deep rich valley, surrounded by lofty and snow-capped mountains, which look down into its squares and streets. It stands at the foot of the St. Bernard, on the junction of the Buttier with the Doire. N. the snows of the Grand Combin, and W. those of the Ruitor close the view.



On the S. the crags of Mont Emilius and the Becca di Nona tower with startling abruptness above the valley. Aosta, as the *Augusta Prætoria* of the Roman itineraries, claims a high antiquity. It was known under the name of Cordèle, as the chief city of the Salassi: but its history earlier than its conquest by Terentius Varro, a general of Augustus, is not to be relied on. The Romans captured it 28 years B.C., and reduced its inhabitants to subjection. Augustus rebuilt the city, gave it his own name, and a garrison of 3000 soldiers. The remains of large public buildings attest its importance at that time, and though much inferior in beauty and extent to many in the S. of France, they will be viewed with interest.

In the main street at the E. entrance of the town is a *Triumphal arch*, in tolerable preservation, decorated with 10 Corinthian pillars, disfigured by a modern roof. It was erected in honour of Augustus, and is one of the finest of the remains.

About 200 yards to the E. of the arch, in a narrow street, is a Roman *bridge*, which once spanned the Buttier, though now 100 yards E. of it. It is buried to a considerable depth by soil. A conduit of water runs under it, and by its side a path; so that you can walk under the arch, which is a fine piece of masonry. In the convent-garden of St. Joseph are the ruins of a *Basilica* or *Prætorian palace*, towers, walls, and fragments of unknown former appropriation, now serving only to perplex antiquaries. The plan of Aosta, like that of other Roman cities, was a square, and the chief streets crossed in the centre. The triumphal arch stood outside the town, in front of the chief gateway. This, the ancient *Porta Prætoria*, now called *Porte de la Trinité*, is still in good preservation, though much of the casing of hewn stone has been removed. It has two façades, with a quadrangle, each façade composed of three arches—that in the centre being much the largest.

The *Roman walls*, flanked with

towers, are most accessible and in best preservation on the S. side of the town.

There are 2 curious mediæval towers, *Porte de Bramafun* and *Tour du Lépreux*. The latter is the scene of Xavier de Maistre's well-known tale.

On the N. of the main street is the *Cathedral*. The woodwork of the stalls in the choir is said to be of the 14th cent. See the very remarkable mediæval mosaics (wrongly described as Roman) in the choir, the monuments of Duke Thomas of Savoy, of several bishops; and in the *Sacristy*, antique plate, shrines, diptychs. On the N. side of the ch. is a Romanesque cloister.

E. of the cathedral is the interesting *Ch. of St. Ours*, with a picturesque campanile of the 12th cent., an old crypt under the choir and fine carved stalls. On the S. side of the ch. is another Romanesque cloister of singular beauty and curiosity; the carving of the capitals is remarkable. Close by is the *Priory*, an elegant edifice in ornamented brick with an octagonal tower. The interior contains frescoes and wood carvings.

Aosta has been much improved since 1854, the chief square is enlarged, and there are many new and handsome buildings. In the *Hôtel de Ville*, the *Italian Club Alpino* have a room full of maps and books illustrating the neighbourhood, to which foreign travellers are welcomed. Aosta is the seat of a bishop and the station of a military commandant.

*Anselm*, archbishop of Canterbury in the 11th century, was born at Aosta. A monument records the flight of *Culcin* from Aosta, 1541.

*St. Bernard*, whose name is immortally associated with the mountain pass between the valleys of the Rhone and Doire, was archdeacon of Aosta; and his personal knowledge of the exposure and suffering incidental to a passage of the Alps, led to his establishment of the celebrated hospice, upon a permanent footing. See for further information Gorret and Bich's local guide, and Mr. Free-

man's 'Historical and Architectural Sketches in Italy.'

[The *Becca di Nona*, 8415 ft. above Aosta, and nearly S. of it, commands a magnificent view of the Alps. The ascent can be made on mules in 6 hrs., the descent in 5 hrs. A hut has been lately built near the top.]

After crossing the *Doire* the path mounts rapidly to *Charvensod*, whence Aosta is well seen, with *Mont Vêlan* and the *Combin* as background; soon afterwards *Monte Rosa*, and still later the *Matterhorn*, come into sight. From *Charvensod* for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  or 3 hrs. the path lies through beautiful woods and meadows, with clear streams and waterfalls, past the hermitage of *St. Grat*, the hamlet of *Chamolê*, and over a ridge to the alp of *Cumbûe*, where the late *Chanoine Carrel* fitted up a chalet. Hence the path is good to the summit, 10,384 ft. From the topmost pastures the path may be easily lost, as it passes into the ravine between the *Becca* and *Mont Emilius*, as if the latter were the object of ascent; but it is well worth while to follow it, as the direct ascent, though shorter, is very hard work.

The view is glorious—the whole of the *Mont Blanc* and *Monte Rosa* ranges, together with the *Vêlan*, *Combin*, *Dent Blanche*, *Weisshorn*, and *Mischabel*; to the S. the *Grand Paradis*, *Grivola*, &c. The *Mont Emilius*, 11,677 ft., close at hand, cuts off the view towards Italy. A panoramic view and full account has been published by *M. Carrel* at Aosta. There are other ways up the mountain one (l. from *Charvensod*) by the glen of the *Dard*, which at the head of the valley leaps in a cascade into a little amphitheatre under the crags of the *Becca*. Pedestrians, in place of returning to Aosta, may cross the mountains by the *Col d'Arbole*, 9300 ft., to *Cogne*. It can be done by sleeping at *Comboë*, or, in 1 day, by starting early from Aosta. *Mont Emilius* lies considerably nearer the pass than the *Becca di Nona*, and a good walker will perhaps not greatly increase his labour by preferring the loftier summit. Its ascent presents no difficulties, but a

local guide is desirable. The course to the col from the top of the mountain ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.) is about S., and the descent to the *Cogne* valley lies by the *Châlets d'Arpisson*, most beautifully situated with commanding view of the *Grivola*. There are two lower passes from *St. Grat* to *Cogne* practicable for mules (see *Rte. 146*.)

The inhabitants of the *Pays d'Aoste* speak a rude patois, but most of them can converse in French more or less, and French is the official language. The beautiful valley is afflicted with cretinism and goitre more perhaps than any other in *Piedmont*. The peasantry appear a squalid and filthy race, generally stunted and diseased. Of the whole population in the neighbourhood of Aosta, 1 in 50 is a cretin; and above half are more or less goitred. Some of these are horrid objects, with tumours as large as their heads appended to their throats.

The extreme dirt of the houses, villages, and persons of the peasantry would be sufficient to account for any amount of disease; but it is remarkable that in the spots they select these dreadful maladies seem to be capricious. At *St. Vincent* they prevail; at *Châtillon*, at *Courmayeur*, and at *La Thuile* they are almost unknown, at *Ivrogne* and *Arvier* they are most prevalent.

*Diligences* to *Ivrea* and *Courmayeur*. Carriages may be hired for *St. Remy* on the *St. Bernard*, and mules for the *Val Pellina* or *Col de Fenêtre*.

On leaving Aosta to ascend the valley the drive for about 4 m. lies across the open plain, and through scenes of its greatest richness in vegetation. At this distance from Aosta the road passes beneath the *Château de Sarre*, purchased by the late King of Italy; nearly opposite to it, on the other side of the valley, is *Ainville*, where the good mule-road up *Val de Cogne* begins (*Rte. 146*).

At *St. Pierre* there is one of the most picturesque châteaux in the valley, and a good view of the snowy N. ridge of the *Grivola*. A fine scene is presented on the approach to *Ville-neuve*, where the vast rock above the

town is surrounded by the Châtel d'Argent, backed by the snowy Alps at the head of the Val Savaranche. About a mile from St. Pierre the road turns towards the river, which it crosses to reach the little town of

*Villeneuve*, a dirty village with large iron-foundries, where there is neither decent inn nor car. (Restaurant at the the post office; Cerf. H. de l'Union.) Near this the valleys of Savaranche and Rhêmes open together from the S. (Rtes. 147 and 147A). Above Villeneuve the valley narrows and becomes much more wooded, the walnut-trees forming in some places almost a forest, especially near

*Arvier*, about 4 m. above Villeneuve. Here the vineyards are celebrated.

The torrent which flows into the Doire from the Val Grisanche on the S. is crossed (Rte. 148). The road now enters the defile of Fort Roc. From the summit of this gorge, Mont Blanc at the head of the valley closes the scene. The view is strikingly beautiful. The road, carried along the face of the precipice, crosses in some places deep rifts in the mountain side; over these drawbridges are thrown, the removal of which would cut off all communication, and oblige an army to make a considerable détour in order to descend into the Val d'Aosta. The pass is also closed by a gate, and enfiladed by a block-house.

From *Fort Roc* the road descends rapidly to the Doire, which it crosses, and thence continues on the l. bank to

*La Salle*, a dirty narrow village, in which, however, is preserved the name of the ancient people of this valley, the Salassi: many traces of its antiquity have been found in and around. On a hill near La Salle are the ruins of a feudal *Castle*.

At the distance of a league from *Morjex* the diligence takes a branch road across the Doire to

*Pré St. Didier* (Inns, poor), situated in beautiful meadows, and commanding a fine view of Mont Blanc.

[Here the ascent of the Little St. Bernard begins (Rte. 149).]

Behind the village are some pret-

tyly-placed *baths*, much frequented by Italians during July and August. The building and avenue to it are pleasing. Beyond the baths a path leads to the mineral springs (temp. 92°) up a ravine which will remind the visitor of Pfäfers. Rugged precipices nearly close the cleft in the mountains down which the stream from the Rutor and Little St. Bernard forces its way.

Good carriage-road from *Pré St. Didier*, about 3 m. of ascent, to

*Courmayeur* (Inns: Hôtel Royal, best, very good and comfortable; Angelo, also good; H. de l'Union. In the hamlet of La Saxe,  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. beyond Courmayeur, is the H. du Mont Blanc, good and finely situated — rather cheaper than the others. At these houses visitors are taken *en pension*). 1-horse carriage to Aosta, 15 fr. Omnibus, 9 A.M., coupé, 6 fr.

Courmayeur, situated at the head of the Val d'Aosta, which above St. Didier is called the *Val d'Entrèves*, is a large village, very beautifully situated 4098 ft. above the sea, at some height above the Doire, and below the confluence of its two branches, which descend from the Col Ferrex and the Col de la Seigne, along the S. side of Mont Blanc. To the W. is *Mont Chétif*, to the E. the *Mont de la Saxe*, while the *Dent du Géant*, and its glaciers, high above *Mont Fréty*, seem to close the valley. From Courmayeur the ascent to the Col du Géant can be traced, and the singular Dent du Géant is conspicuous to the E. of the pass, but the summit of Mont Blanc is concealed by the Mont Chétif. Half an hour's walk, however, discloses the chain from the "Monarch" to the Grandes Jorasses.

Courmayeur is much resorted to in summer by invalids, for the sake of its mineral waters. The spring of La Victoire is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. S.W.; its waters are impregnated with carbonic acid gas, sulphate of magnesia, and a little iron, and have a temperature of about 54°. The spring of La Marguerite varies a little in the proportions of its components, but its

temperature is 12° higher. The Piedmontese have great reliance on the salutary effects of these springs, and the resort to them brings together much agreeable Italian society.

The baths of *La Saxe* are about 1 m. beyond Courmayeur, and somewhat rough.

The *guides* and *mules* were placed in 1860 on the same footing as those at Chamonix, except that, on payment of a small fee, the traveller is able to select whom he pleases. Laurent Lanier, Laurent Proment, Emile Rey, and J. Grange, are recommended as first-rate glacier guides. J. and V. Rey, H. Seraphin, J. Proment, H. Ange, and J. Gadin, are also good. Alexis Berthod is an excellent porter. *Tariff for guides*, back-fare included:—The Cramont, 8 fr.; Mont Chétif, 6; Mont de la Saxe, 6; Gl. de Brenva, 4; Jardin de Miage, 6; Col Chécruit, 5 (by Lac Combai, 6); Grandes Jorasses, 80; Col du Géant and back, 15; Chamonix, by Cols de la Seigne and Bonhomme, in 2 days 27, in 3 days 30; by Col du Géant, 50; by Col de Miage, 50; by Mont Blanc, 110 each guide; Martigny, by Col Ferrex, 20.

#### *Excursions.*

*a. Ascent of the Cramont.*—An excursion which no visitor to Courmayeur should fail to make if the weather be favourable, for few spots in the Alps will afford him so fine a view of Mont Blanc, or a more glorious panorama.

For riders it is first necessary to go to Pré St. Didier, 1 hr. (pedestrians may take a shady path on the rt. bank), then ascend by the Little St. Bernard road (Rte. 149) for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. to a path which strikes to the rt. among the larches, and mounts through them past several clusters of chalets for about 2 hrs. Mules cannot go beyond the wood, and must be left, and from this point there is about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr.'s climb to the summit: total, 5 hrs. from Courmayeur. There is a more direct but difficult path for pedestrians up the

Courmayeur face, for which a local guide is requisite.

The highest point, 9059 ft., is the outer edge of a large slab or flat mass of rock, sloping at an angle of 20° towards the S.; the upper end of this mass actually overhangs the rocks below, so that a stone dropped from it would fall perpendicularly hundreds of feet, and then striking the precipitous sides of the mountain, would bound into the abyss beneath.

Hence the whole of the enormous "massif" of Mont Blanc is open to the observer: from the peaks which bound the Col de la Seigne to those above the Col Ferrex, every aiguille and glacier in this line of nearly 20 m. is seen, within an angle of 150°. The depths of the Allée Blanche are concealed by some low intervening mountains, which may be considered the western bases of the Cramont.

Towards the E. the Val d'Aosta forms a beautiful vista. The mountains which bound it sweep down to the Doire, and leave between them the channels which are the courses of its affluents. In the valley the Doire appears like a thread of silver. Farther to the E. are the summits of Monte Rosa and the Mont Cervin. Looking S.E., directly down the line of ascent to the Cramont, the Camp of Prince Thomas, and the table-land above the precipices of the valley of La Thuile, appear to be immediately beneath. Above and beyond them lies the enormous ice-field of the Rutor, one of the finest objects within the view: and beyond it are the glaciers at the head of the valleys of Rhêmes, and Grisanche, with the Grivola and Grand Paradis towering above them.

Towards the S. is the pass and plain of the Little St. Bernard.

Towards the Great St. Bernard the course may be traced of the pass of the Seréna from Morgex to St. Remy. The hospice is not visible, but the Mont Vélán and Grand Combin are seen beyond it.

Saussure thus records his second visit to the Cramont:—"Nous passâmes trois heures sur ce sommet;

j'y en avois aussi passé trois dans mon premier voyage; et ces six heures sont certainement celles de ma vie dans lesquelles j'ai goûté les plus grands plaisirs que puissent donner la contemplation et l'étude de la nature."

The traveller who proposes to make a visit to the Cramont a part of his day's journey to Bourg St. Maurice, should start very early, and direct that the mules, if he take any, should, from where he left them, be sent across the pasturages to chalets which lie in his way to La Balme. He will thus gain time in ascending the valley, though the descent to the hamlet of Eléva, down a steep and rugged path over loose stones, is fatiguing. La Balme is in the valley, about an hour's walk above the spot at which the track turns up towards the Cramont; and there is no object of interest missed between the two places. The name Cramont is probably, as elsewhere in the Alps, a corruption from Grand Mont, but has been derived from the "*cremonis jugum*" of Livy.

b. To the *Col de Chécruit*, highly to be recommended on account of the splendid and uninterrupted view of the chain of Mt. Blanc and the Allée Blanche. It lies due W. of Courmayeur, and may be made on a mule (2 hrs. to the Col). You cross the Doire, pass through the village of Dolina, and along the N. side of the ravine for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from Courmayeur; when the path ascends the side by a series of steep zigzags past a little oratory on a rock (1 hr.); up slopes of grass, a narrow stony path, and then pastures, in another hr. to the col, 6542 ft. The best view is obtained from a rocky eminence on the rt. No guide is necessary. [A footpath, not easy to find, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. below the col, leads in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. to the Mt. *Chétif*, also called *Mont Dolina* and *Pain du Sucre*, 7671 ft., commanding a remarkably fine view of the tremendous precipices of Mont Blanc and the deep valley beneath, but not equal as a panorama to

that from the Cramont.] Instead of descending at once through the pine-forest into the Allée Blanche, it will well repay you to keep along the slope of the mountain until you arrive above the Lac de Combai (Rte. 139), then descending to the lake. You thus gain a complete view of the valley, of Mont Blanc and the Glacier de Miage. For this latter part of the excursion, however, a guide is advisable. From Lac de Combai you can return to Courmayeur, by the Allée Blanche, in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.

c. The *Mont de la Saxe*,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. N.E. of Courmayeur, is easily accessible, and commands a glorious near view of Mont Blanc, and a prospect in some respects finer than that from the Cramont, but less panoramic; the Ruitor, and the peaks of the Cogne range are well seen. After passing the baths of La Saxe, the track to the rt., leading into the Val Ferret, is followed for a short distance, and then the ascent begins by an easy path, which gradually reaches the summit; this is a sort of undulating plateau, in which no single point much overlooks the rest. The finest view is from the E. end, called *Trossé Blanc*, 8435 ft. The mountain can also be climbed from the Courmayeur side.

Another commanding point for Mt. Blanc lies just E. of Courmayeur, opposite the Mt. *Chétif*. This is the *Col du Sapin*, reached in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. by ascending the little valley between the Mts. Saxe and Cormet; the view from the latter is magnificent. Descent may be made on the E. side of Mt. Saxe to the Val Ferrex. By way of this col a high rte. has been followed to the Great St. Bernard in  $8\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from Courmayeur. It passes on the rt. the *Grande Rossère*, 10,904 ft., and 3 ridges by the *Col d'Arteréva* ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.), *Col Bellecombe* ( $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.), and *Col de St. Remy* (1 hr. 20 m.). For nearly the whole distance the chain of Mt. Blanc is full in view.

d. Few excursions in the Alps are more interesting than that to the up-

per portion of the *Glacier of La Brenva*; but, since its retreat, the ordinary tourist will gain little but a stony walk by visiting its lower extremity. Good walkers, with a guide, may penetrate, by a steep ascent on the E. flank of the ice, to the level of the upper ice-fall under the A. de Péteret and Mont Blanc, one of the most majestic scenes in the Alps. It is possible, and not very difficult, to ascend from this point La Tour Ronde, descending by the névé of the *Glacier de Géant* to the hut on that pass or the *Mont Fréty*—a noble excursion for competent mountaineers.

c. The Inn on the *Mont Fréty*, 2½ hrs. from Courmayeur, at the southern base of the *Col du Géant* (Rte. 142) opens every summer on the 1st July. From thence a mountaineer of moderate experience will find no difficulty in reaching alone the summit of the Col, which is interesting as well for the magnificent view which it commands as for its associations with the history of Alpine adventure since the time of De Saussure. The steep slope above the inn was in 1860 the scene of a sad accident (see Rte. 142), wherein 3 English travellers and one of their guides—Frédéric Tairraz, of Chamonix—were lost. From the col there is a most glorious view of glaciers and mountain chains to the S. and E., among which the *Grand Paradis* and *Monte Rosa* rise with imposing effect. A wooden hut has been erected on the pass, where the night may be spent.

f. Another fine excursion is by the *Allée Blanche* to the *Glacier de Miage*, ascending it some way, for a view of the ice-cascades at its head. This glacier is on a grand scale, and has 2 important tributaries—the *Glacier du Mt. Blanc* and *Glacier du Dôme*. Over it lies the pass of the *Col de Miage*, 11,076 ft. (Rte. 142), and by the *Glacier du Mont Blanc* is the easiest ascent of *Mont Blanc* from the Italian side.

g. *Mont Blanc* was first climbed from

the Courmayeur side via the *Col du Géant*. The ascent was facilitated by a hut under the *Aig. du Midi*, but this is now little better than a ruin. From the spot where it stands, the Corridor can be reached in 4½ hrs., by the *Tacul* and *Mont Maudit*. This was the rte. by which Messrs. Hudson and Kennedy first attempted, without guides, to scale the mountain. They were defeated by bad weather.

This route is now seldom used. The problem of a direct ascent by one of the great southern glaciers was first solved in 1865 by Messrs. C. E. Mathews, Moore, Frank and Horace Walker. Leaving a bivouac 5 hrs. above Courmayeur on the side of the *Brenva Glacier*, they came in 3 hrs. to the foot of a buttress of *Mont Blanc*; climbing this, and passing over an extremely narrow crest, they reached the steep slopes of the névé, which led up to the Corridor. The summit of the Corridor was thus reached in 10½ hrs. from their sleeping-place. By bearing more to the left the top of the *Mur de la Côte* might have been gained. This is a very difficult ascent, and has been but once repeated. To attempt the descent would be in the highest degree perilous.

A route which, though totally different in character to that from Chamonix, may from its freedom from any extraordinary risk or difficulty fairly be considered a rival for the favour of climbers, was at last discovered by Mr. Kennedy in 1872. A comfortable wooden hut has since been erected on the rocks known as the *Aiguille Grise*, high above the E. side of the *Miage Glacier*. Below this a porter was killed in 1877 by a falling sérac, and it is obvious, therefore, that care must be taken to select a track safe from such missiles. From this point the summit of *Mont Blanc* may be reached in 8 to 10 hrs. In contrast to the Chamonix route, which is throughout a walk up snow, this is a sharp rock climb, but in fair weather it presents no very serious difficulties or dangers, and with good guides is safe as a descent. It is not, however, fit for persons without

considerable experience in mountain climbing. Mr. Moore crossed, on one occasion, from Courmayeur to Chamonix by this route within the 24 hrs., and without sleeping out, a feat few guides or travellers care to repeat.

Between the Brenva and Miage glaciers lie the two small glaciers of Brouillard and Fresnay, and above them the face of Mont Blanc rises in a precipice which was long held inaccessible. But in 1877 Mr. Eccles, having reached the head of the Fresnay Glacier from the Brouillard Glacier, gained the S.E. ridge of Mont Blanc which falls towards the Péteret, and by dint of a good deal of step-cutting followed it to Mont Blanc de Courmayeur, and so reached the top of Mont Blanc. This is a difficult ascent, but not apparently dangerous, with good guides and a competent party.

h. The W. peak of the *Grandes Jorasses* was ascended in 1865 from Val Ferrex by Mr. Whymper. The slightly higher E. peak was gained in 1868 by Mr. H. Walker. This is a very fine expedition for capable climbers: its difficulty varies greatly according to the season. The view is one of the finest in the whole chain of the Alps.

i. The *Aiguille de Peuteret*, the flame-like pinnacle so conspicuous from the Allée Blanche, was climbed in 1877 by Lord Wentworth. It is a severe rock-climb, fit only for practised cragsmen.

Besides glacier passes (Rte. 142), 5 routes diverge from Courmayeur: 1, to Aosta; 2, to the Great St. Bernard (Rte. 137); 3, the Little St. Bernard (Rte. 149); 4, the Col de la Seigne to Chamonix (Rte. 139); 5, the Col de Ferrex to Martigny (Rte. 137).

## ROUTE 135.

### MARTIGNY TO AOSTA.—PASS OF THE GREAT ST. BERNARD.

| Martigny.                              | Hrs. Min. |
|----------------------------------------|-----------|
| Bourg . . . . .                        | 0 30      |
| St. Branchler . . . . .                | 2 30      |
| Orsières . . . . .                     | 1 15      |
| Liddes . . . . .                       | 1 30      |
| St. Pierre (diligence stops) . . . . . | 1 15      |
| Hospice . . . . .                      | 3 30      |
| St. Remy . . . . .                     | 1 30      |
| St. Oyen . . . . .                     | 1 15      |
| Aosta . . . . .                        | 3 30      |

Distance, 47 m.; 11 hours' walk to the Hospice; about 6 hrs. thence to Aosta. Carriage-road to Cantine de Proz, and from St. Remy to Aosta: 1-horse carr. to Orsières, 10 fr.; Liddes, 16 fr. Mule from Liddes to the hospice, 6 fr.; to St. Remy, 10 fr.: 1-horse carr. to Aosta, 10 to 15 fr. Carriage to Proz and mule to hospice 30 fr., including back fare.

This pass is more remarkable in an historic and romantic point of view—on account of its Hospice, monks, and dogs—than for its scenery, which is inferior to that on most of the other great passes. Buonaparte crossed it on the 20th of May, 1800. Each regiment occupied 3 days in the passage, arriving the first night at St. Pierre, the second at St. Remy or Étroubles, the third at Aosta.

From Martigny (1560 ft.) (Rte. 56) the road passes through Bourg-Martigny, and shortly after crosses the Dranse to its l. bank. The bed of this river still exhibits evidence of the devastation occasioned in 1818 by the bursting of a lake in the valley of Bagnes. See Rte. 136.

The road leaves that to Chamonix on the rt., and continues up the valley of the Dranse to the miserable villages of Valette and Bovernier, where the *Val Champy* (rt.) offers to the pedestrian a pleasanter rte. than the high road as far as Orsières. Beyond Bovernier the river is recrossed, and the road enters a defile so narrow that it was found

necessary to cut a *Tunnel* 200 ft. long through the rock. Emerging from it, the traveller sees 1. the ruins of a convent overwhelmed with rubbish brought down by the bursting of the lake, 1818. Bovernier was saved from the same fate by a projecting rock. The road recrosses the river, and ascends on the l. bank to

7½ m. *St. Branchier* (or *Sembranchier*), a much larger village under *Mont Catoigne*, at the confluence of the two rivers *Dranse*, coming from the *Val de Bagnes* and the *Val d'Entremont* and *St. Bernard*. (*Inn*: *Croix*, cheap.) Guides and mules to the *Pierre à voir* (Rte. 56).

Above *St. Branchier* the *Val d'Entremont* offers some fine scenes, but none strikingly grand; it has the general character of an Alpine valley. The *Dranse* is twice crossed before reaching

4 m. *Orsières* (2890 ft.) (*Inn*: *H. des Alpes*, fallen off). [Here *Val Ferrex*, leading to *Courmayeur* by the *Col de Ferrex* (Rte. 137), opens into the *Val d'Entremont* on the rt. From *Orsières* to *Chamonix* there is a pleasant mule-path to the *Forclaz* (Rte. 141) by the valley and lake of *Clumpey*, lying to the W. of *Mont Catoigne*. The lake is said to be well stocked with fish. A restaurant has been opened near it. The lake is beautifully placed, and has the *Grand Combin* in full view. Mule to *Chamonix* 8 fr.; but as much for back-fare, and as much for the man—total 24 fr. 4 hrs. to col; 7 hrs. to *Tête Noire* inn. The easiest glacier pass to *Chamonix* is the *Col du Tour* (Rte. 142).]

Beyond *Orsières* there is a fine view, and the scenery becomes rather more wild. The torrent can seldom be seen in the deep gorge.

4½ m. *Liddle* (*Inns*: *Union*; *Angleterre*, poor), 4390 ft. above the sea.

12 fr. is often demanded for a char to *Martigny*, but one may generally be procured for 8 fr.

3¼ m. *St. Pierre* (*Inn*: *Au Déjeuner de Napoléon*, fair) is a dirty, wretched village.

An inscription recording the ravages of an "Ismaelita cohors" in the 10th century formerly existed in the church. Between A.D. 906 and 973 the western Alpine Passes were infested by bands of Saracenic robbers issuing from *Fraxinetum*, a stronghold on the coast of *Provence*. In 940 they crossed the *St. Bernard* and burnt the monastery of *St. Maurice*. In 972, *St. Majolus*, Abbot of *Cluny*, was taken prisoner at the bridge of *Orsières*, and ransomed for a large sum. The church dates from the 11th century, and has a fine carillon of bells.

The brothers *Ballay*, of *St. Pierre*, in 1858, discovered the route from this place to the summit of the *Grand Combin* by the *Col de la Maison Blanche*. *Daniel Ballay* still acts as a guide. [L. is the *Valsorey*, up which lies the rte. to *Mauvoisin* by the *Col de la Maison Blanche* (Rte. 136), to *Chanrion* by the *Col du Sonadon* (Rte. 136), to the top of *Mt. Vêlan* (see below) and that of the *Grand Combin* (Rte. 136). Rt. is an easy pass of 4 hrs. to the chalets of *Ferrex* by the *Col des Planards*, 9386 ft., at the head of the small *Val des Planards*.]

On leaving *St. Pierre* the road crosses a deep abyss, through which the *Dranse* forces its way. On the l. the torrent, descending from the *Valsorey* glacier, forms a magnificent cascade.

The old path led through the forest of *St. Pierre*, among rocks and roots of pines, and was so steep and tortuous that *Napoleon's* difficulties in transporting his artillery were here, perhaps, the greatest that he encountered on the pass from natural obstacles. The present road, cut along the precipices which overhang the deep course of the *Dranse*, avoids the steep rises and falls, and leads by an easy ascent through a savage defile.

Beyond the forest, where the pines are stunted from their elevation above the level of the sea, the traveller arrives at some pastures on which there

are many châteaux. Here Mont Vêlan appears to forbid further progress: the glacier de Proz, or de Menouve, streams down into the plain of Proz, where, amidst the shelter of surrounding mountains, numerous herds gather the rich herbage. The char-road ceases about 2 hrs. below the Hospice at the little *Inn* called the

3½ m. *Cantine de Proz*, 5912 ft. [From this the ascent of *Mont Vêlan*, 12,353 ft., can be made in 10 hrs., 6 hrs. up.

This mountain was first ascended in 1825 by one of the monks. The first part of the ascent (guide 25 fr.) is up the pastures of the *Montagne de Proz*, on the N. bank of the torrent, to the *Glacier de Proz*, which runs down in the direction of the St. Bernard. This is traversed to the "Bergschrund" at its head in 1 hr., or about 3½ hrs. from the Cantine. Here the main body of the Vêlan is reached, which rises in a wall of rock, perhaps 2000 ft. high. It is not difficult, but it is necessary to have a guide who knows the mountain. The top is a saddle-shaped plain of snow, perhaps ½ m. in length, and being situated between Mt. Blanc and Mte. Rosa, and close to the Grand Combin, commands an exceedingly fine view. It is better to descend by the glacier and valley of *Valsorey* to St. Pierre. This will take from 4 to 5 hrs., and, for the exquisite beauty of the glacier itself, and grandeur of the near scenery—it does not command distant views—the route is scarcely to be surpassed in the Alps. It lies between Mont Vêlan and the Grand Combin. The descent for some way is along the crest of rocks which bounds the glacier on the side of Italy, and very steep. At the junction of the Glacier de Tzeudet is the little lake of *Goille à l'assu*, described by Saussure. Those bound for Aosta may descend as they came, and cross the *Col de Menouve*, 9056 ft., a pass between Mont Vêlan and head of the St. Bernard. A more direct ascent on the S. side has been effected.]

[At the head of the *Valsorey Glacier*,

nearly due S., lies the *Col de Valsorey*, well marked, and leading to *Val d'Ollomont* (a cabaret, and in about 3½ hrs. from the Col to *Valpellina*, Rte. 132.)]

On rising above the plain of Proz the path to the Hospice enters another defile, and beyond it another summer pasturage, steep and rugged; the scene becomes more sterile and dreary, another ravine is passed, and the summit is approached. Near the path is a cairn, under which are buried the bodies of some workmen killed Nov. 19, 1874, by a "veurra," or whirlwind raising the snow in a sort of frozen waterspout. A little higher up, an inscription records the fate of two monks and a "marronnier," or lay brother (an ancient word said to have signified a descendant of the Moors), who perished at the same time. At length, after crossing some beds of snow, the solitary walls of the

5½ m. HOSPICE appears, and the traveller reaches, on the very crest of the pass, this dwelling in the clouds, 8131 English feet above the sea.

Here, in the practice of the most disinterested benevolence, lives a community who devote the best time of their life, when man is most susceptible of his powers for its enjoyment, to the service of those of their fellow-men whose pursuits oblige them to traverse these dreary fields in seasons of danger.

The Hospice is a massive stone building, on the very highest point of the pass, where it is exposed to tremendous storms from the N.E. and S.W. On the N.W. it is sheltered by the *Mont Chevalletaz*, and in an opposite direction by the *Mont Mort*. There is no mountain which bears the name of the St. Bernard. Like that of the St. Gothard, the name is only given to the pass. The chief building is capable of accommodating 70 or 80 travellers with beds; 300 may be sheltered; and between 500 and 600 have received assistance in one day. Besides this, there is a house, called *Hôtel St. Louis*, built as a place of

refuge in case of fire—an event which has twice happened.

The ground-floor of the main building consists of stabling and store-rooms. A flight of steps leads up to the principal entrance in the first floor, where a long corridor connects the offices, &c., with the chapel. Another corridor on the floor above leads to the dormitories, the refectory, the gallery of the chapel, &c. The *Drawing-room*, appropriated to the reception of strangers, especially ladies, is entered from the stairs between the two corridors. Here brethren do the honours to their visitors.

The *Clavandier* (or Bursar), the commissary of the establishment, is the brother who usually presides at the hours of 11½ and 6, at dinner and supper. Gentlemen dine or sup with all the monks in their refectory.

The room appropriated to visitors is large and convenient; it is hung with drawings and prints, sent by travellers in acknowledgment of the kind attentions which they had received. The piano was a present from H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, and is not a little prized; the harmonium from the composer Blumenthal. Attached to this room is a cabinet, in which a day unfavourable for out-door enjoyment may be passed with interest and pleasure. It contains collections of the plants, insects, and minerals of the Alps, and many relics of the Temple dedicated to Jupiter, which formerly stood on this pass, near the site of the hospice. These antiquities consist of votive tablets, and figures in bronze and other metals, arms, coins, &c., and are curiously illustrative of the early worship on this mountain, and the intercourse established over the pass. No trace whatever now remains of the temple, though these relics are found upon what is known to have been its site. Steps cut in the rock may yet be seen, which led up to the spot upon which the temple stood.

The system of purveyance seems to be well regulated. Supplies come from Aosta and the neighbouring villages. The winter store of hay for

[*Switz.*]

the cows is so valuable that the mules which ascend from either side with travellers generally bring their own hay, or are supplied from a vender established in the convent, at a higher rate than below. Wood for firing is one of the most important necessities. Not a stick grows within 2 leagues, and all the fuel is brought from a forest belonging to the convent in the Val Ferrex, a distance of nearly 4 leagues. Its consumption is considerable, for, at this great elevation, water boils at about 190°, which is so much less favourable for the cooking of meat than at 212°, that it requires 5 hrs. to effect that which at a less elevation may be done in 3 hrs. The convent is warmed with hot air by stoves.

The *Chapel* is generally well attended on Sundays and Festas by the peasants from the neighbouring valleys and pastures. It contains the grave of *General Dessaix*, who fell at Marengo: the monument was erected by Napoleon.

In the chapel is a box for donations, and travellers who receive the hospitality of the monks offer their acknowledgments in a sum not less than they would have paid at an inn.

Visitors universally acknowledge the kind and courteous attention of these excellent men. The language used by them is French, though there are Italians and Germans among them. The periodical works of some academic bodies and institutions are sent to them, and they have a small library, which is chiefly theological. During the short summer, their intercourse with well-informed travellers is extensive, which is shown in the names and notices left by travellers.

There are usually 10 or 12 brethren and a number of assistant lay brethren (*marronniers*). They are all young men, who enter upon this devoted service at 18. The severity of the weather at this height often impairs their health, and they are driven to retire to a lower and more genial clime, with broken constitutions. Even in summer it has happened that the ice has never

melted in the lake, and in some years (1816) not a week has passed without snow falling. It always freezes in the morning, and the hospice is rarely four months clear of deep snow. Around the building it averages 7 or 8 feet, and the drifts sometimes accumulate to the height of 40 feet. The severest cold recorded is 29° below zero of Fahrenheit: it has often been observed at -18° and -20°. The greatest heat has been 68°. January is the coldest month.

"The monks have a deep cellar where they keep their wine, &c., unfrozen. Fresh meat is procured in the summer from the valleys, but for winter they lay up a store of salted meat. They also keep a number of cows to supply them with milk, butter, and cheese. One only is kept at the hospice during the winter: the rest are sent to Martigny, and their produce carried up in the solid form. The monks are also obliged to keep 45 horses all the year, in order to bring wood from a forest 3 leagues off. This employment lasts for 2 months during summer, hence the wood must be by far the most expensive article. Travellers are passing every day during the winter, notwithstanding the perils of such a pass at such times. These persons, when they arrive at a certain house not far from the summit, are desired to wait till the following morning, when a servant and a dog descend from the top to this kind of refuge, and take up all the persons assembled, the servant being conducted by the dog, who, it appears, never misses his way, but, entirely hidden, except his tail, in the snow, directs the march of the whole cavalcade. The stories about the monks going out searching for lost travellers, and the dogs carrying wine, are false in toto, and the proof is, that such proceeding is impossible, for as great difficulty exists to the monks roaming about as to the travellers. There are generally 5 or 6 dogs at the hospice. They are bred in the Canton of Berne. Tradition reports that they are a

cross between the Newfoundland and the Pyrenean. In the year 1825 all the dogs at the convent and 3 servants were destroyed by an avalanche. The breed was not lost, as some dogs are sent to other hospices. 10 servants are kept in winter, and 8 in summer, of whom 2 descend daily to the refuges to bring up travellers, from the month of October to the end of April, the time of course varying according to the season. Service is performed in the chapel at 4½ A.M. in summer, and 5 in winter, and at 8 P.M. all the year round.

"The times at which the poor travellers pass in greatest numbers during the winter, are in November, February, March, and April. As many as 2000 per month will pass in February and March, because the poor inhabitants of the valleys are then going out to seek work; in November they come home with money in their pockets." In 1877 about 20,000 workmen, mostly Italians, crossed the pass.

"A column opposite to the middle of the lake marks the boundary of Piedmont and the Valais; above and beyond it, is the little plain of Jupiter, where a temple formerly stood, and from which a Roman road led down on the Piedmontese side of the pass. This road may be traced in the hewn rock, and the remains of a massive pavement; but not a vestige of the temple is left above the surface.

"The first foundation of the hospice has been attributed by some to Louis le Débonnaire, by others to Charlemagne. There is historical evidence that a monastery existed here before the year 851.

"The present hospice was founded in 962, by Bernard, who was born of a noble family of Savoy, at the château of Menthon, on the lake of Annecy. He died in 1008, after having governed the convent upwards of 40 years. For some time after the death of St. Bernard the hospice was exposed to frequent outrages from barbarians who traversed the mountains; and its records of the 11th century present a succession of calamities.

"It soon acquired celebrity and opulence. As early as 1177, it had, in various dioceses, 88 benefices, in priories, cures, châteaux, and farms; it had lands in Sicily, in Flanders, and in England. Its climax of riches and importance was in 1480, when it possessed 98 livings. Subsequently, however, the Reformation, political changes in the states, loss of distant property, disputes with the popes, with the neighbouring states, and with each other, drove the monks of St. Bernard to seek even eleemosynary assistance. Very little property in land now belongs to the hospice; a vineyard at Clarens, and a farm at Roche, in the Pays de Vaud, are the principal: their resources are small, and in aid of them collections are regularly made in the Swiss cantons."—*Brockedon*.

Buonaparte rather impoverished than enriched the monks. It was true that he assisted them with donations, but his claims upon their funds exceeded his benefits; 40 men were quartered upon them for months together, and 60,000 passed in one season, and all these were assisted.

Near the convent is the *Morgue*, or receptacle for the dead. It is a low building, where the bodies of the unfortunate victims to storms and avalanches in these mountains have been placed. They have generally been found frozen, and put into this horrid receptacle, tied on to the long narrow boards which have served as litters to transport them from the spot at which they were found. Here many have "dried up and withered," and on some even the clothes have remained after 18 years. In a walled enclosure on one side of the morgue was a great accumulation of bones, white, broken, and apparently the gathering of centuries.

On leaving the hospice to descend to the Val d'Aosta, the path skirts the lake, beside which is the boundary-stone between Switzerland and Italy, and runs between it and the Plan de Jupiter. A little farther, after passing through a short defile, the scene opens towards Italy, into the basin of the

*Vacherie*, where the cows of the convent are pastured. The road turns abruptly to the right, and sweeps round the basin to descend gradually to the plain below.

The view on first looking out upon the *Vacherie*, from the gorge in the Mont Mort, is very fine; the mountains on the opposite side are grand in form and elevation: the most striking being the *Pain de Sucre*, celebrated by Saussure.

At the lower end of the *Vacherie* the path winds down by zigzags, and the descent is rapid to

4 m. *St. Remy*, a dreary little village (*Inn*: H. des Alpes, indifferent). Here return charrs to Aosta may generally be obtained for 10 francs. Travellers who leave Aosta to visit the hospice in a char for St. Remy, and intend to return, cause it to wait for them here for four or six hours, and pay 20 francs for the char for the day, with a *buona-mano* to the driver.

Here the Italian *custom-house* is placed. From St. Remy the road descends, with little interest in the scenery, to

*St. Oyen*. At

4½ m. *Etronbles*, the St. Bernard branch of the Buttier is crossed, and the road descends to *Gignol*, where the vegetation begins to luxuriate, and the effects of an Italian climate are felt and seen. Here there is a fine peep into the Valpelline. Below *Gignol* the richness of the scenery is constantly increasing. Trellised vines and Indian corn mark the approach to the valley of Aosta, and the first view of its ancient city, where the background is filled with the magnificent forms and snowy summits of the range of Mt. Emilius is very fine indeed.

10 m. AOSTA (Rte. 134).

## ROUTE 136.

## MARTIGNY TO AOSTA, BY THE VAL DE BAGNES AND COL DE FENÊTRE.

|                                    | Hrs.<br>walking. |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Martigny.                          |                  |
| St. Branchier, carriage-road . . . | 2½               |
| Chables . . . . .                  | 1½               |
| Champsec . . . . .                 | 1                |
| Lourtier, bridle-road . . . .      | 6½               |
| Mauvoisin . . . . .                | 3                |
| Chermontane . . . . .              | 3½               |
| Col de Fenêtre . . . . .           | 1½               |
| Valpelline, carriage-road . . .    | 4                |
| Aosta . . . . .                    | 3                |

This fertile and beautiful valley can be visited with convenience since the establishment of the little *Inn* at Mauvoisin. Carriage-road as far as Champsec. Post-car to Chables, Martigny to

7½ m. *St. Branchier* (Rte. 135).

Here the traveller, leaving the rte. of the Great St. Bernard, crosses the E. branch of the Drance, and enters a broad mountain basin, the vestibule of the *Val de Bagnes*. The road runs over undulating park-like ground to a defile, cut through black friable soil, and opening into the rich vale of

4½ m. *Chables*, formerly written *Za-blo* (*Inns*: H. Perrodin; H. du G. Combin; both fair). This, often called *Bagnes*, is the principal village in the valley, beautifully situated in the midst of meadows and orchards, and entered over a lofty stone bridge. In the distance are seen the snows of the *Ruinette*, the glacier of *Gétroz* and *Mt. Pleureur*; N. the *Pierre à Voir* (Rte. 56), an ascent of 3½ hrs., and E. of it the *Col d'Etablon* or *Verbier*, leading to *Riddes* in the *Rhone* valley. Mules, &c. are best hired here as there are none at

3 m. *Champsec* (a restaurant), where the carriage-road ends, and the ascent becomes steep. A paved path leads up to the chalet village of

3½ m. *Lourtier* (3657 ft.) (*Inn*), where

the traveller enters a higher region and grander scenery. Looking back, he has a view of the vale he has passed and of the distant *Dent du Midi*. The river dashes down the declivity, and in ½ hr. a spot is reached where it rushes through a narrower passage. Here the path winds for 10 minutes through a chaos of rocks, precipitated from the mountain side in 1868. The next scene is very beautiful—a little basin in which the chalets of *Granges Neuves* and great boulders are half-buried in brushwood: on the rt. the torrent from the *Corbassière glacier* tumbles in a long cascade (Rte. 13). Another ascent through forest leads to a second basin still more beautiful, the mountains, green and bushy, circling round it. Here stands the hamlet of *Fionay* with a cottage *Inn* (3 beds), the owner a good guide.

[From this point the *Col de Séveren*, *Col du Crêt*, or *Col de Vasevey*, just N. of *Mt. Pleureur*, can be crossed to *Val d'Héremence* (Rte. 131). They are all glacier passes: the *Col du Crêt* short and easy, 6 hrs. to *La Barma*; *Col du Praz fleuri*, over the *Gl. du Grand Desert*, passing close to the *Pointe de Rosablanc*, 10,984 ft. (which can be ascended—magnificent panorama), 11 hrs. to *Héremence*, the most interesting. A fine pass—*Col de Louvie*—leads W. of the *Pointe de Rosablanc* into the *Rhone* valley by *Val Nendaz*, 12 hrs.]

Just above *Fionay* is one of the wildest scenes in the valley. The cliffs approach and nearly meet, the *Dranse* falls with bewildering roar, high above are the precipices of *Mont Pleureur*, while, as a contrast, to the N. rise the distant crags of the *Dent du Midi*. The path mounts the barrier by zigzags to a stony vale. Here the bridge to the rt. should not be crossed. Another ascent and basin—half forest, half pasture—brings the traveller to the remarkable bridge and gorge of *Mauvoisin*, and a few more zigzags to the little *Inn* and chapel of

5 m. *Mauvoisin* (H. de *Gétroz*), a solitary house (lately enlarged; clean,

but poor. Guides, and a reasonable tariff). This is shut in by precipices N. and S., directly under *Mont Pleureur* (12,159 ft.), on a mound red with rhododendron and thinly sprinkled with the last straggling pines. To the S. are seen the snows of the main range, 9 m. distant; to the N., over Chables, the *Pierre à Voir*; and just S. of *Mont Pleureur*, and close to the inn, the terminal séracs of the

*Glacier of Gétroz* (or *Giétroz*). This steep ice-stream has been the cause of terrible catastrophes, by falling into the valley and damming up the river. In 1595 a lake thus formed burst its bounds, and swept away in its destructive course more than 140 persons, besides houses and cattle. A more recent inundation, that of 1818, has left fearful traces in the valley. Among the boulders brought down by it was one which contains above 1400 cubic ft.; and the height to which the waters rose is to this day distinctly marked.

"In the spring of 1818 the people of the valley of Bagnes became alarmed on observing the low state of the Dranse, and they discovered that vast masses of the glacier of Gétroz, and avalanches of snow, had fallen into a narrow part of the valley between *Mont Pleureur* and *Mont Mauvoisin*, and formed a dike of ice and snow 600 ft. wide and 400 ft. high, on a base of 3000 ft., behind which the waters of the Dranse had accumulated, and formed a lake above 7000 ft. long. M. Venetz, the engineer of the Valais, was consulted, and he immediately decided upon cutting a gallery through this barrier, 60 ft. above the level of the water at the time of commencing, and where the dike was 600 ft. thick. He calculated upon making a tunnel through this mass before the water should have risen 60 ft. higher in the lake. On the 10th of May the work was begun by gangs of 50 men, who relieved each other, and worked, without intermission, day and night, and by the evening of the 13th the

tunnel was pierced. At first the opening was not large enough to carry off the supplies which the lake received; but this soon enlarged, as the water melted the floor of the gallery, and the torrent rushed through. In 32 hrs. the lake sank 10 ft., and during the following 24 hrs. 20 ft. more; in a few days it would have been emptied; but the cataract which issued from the gallery melted and broke up a large portion of the base of the dike which served as its buttress, and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the 16th of June the dike burst, and in half an hour the lake was empty.

"The greatest accumulation of water had been 800,000,000 of cubic feet; the tunnel, before the disruption, had carried off nearly 330,000,000. In one hour and a half the water reached Martigny, a distance of 7 leagues. Through the first 70,000 ft. it passed with the velocity of 33 ft. per second—four or five times faster than the most rapid river known; yet it was charged with ice, rocks, earth, trees, houses, cattle, and men; 34 persons were lost, 400 chalets swept away, and the damage done in the 2 hrs. exceeded a million of Swiss livres. All the bridges were swept away, and among them the bridge of Mauvoisin, which was elevated 90 feet above the ordinary height of the Dranse."

At the present day the heap of ice, which is continually renewed by falls from the glacier, is much reduced in volume, and its increase checked by works which have been carried on for many years. They consist of heavy breakwaters of slate-rock, which direct the whole force of the river against the face of the ice, which is thus removed as fast as formed.

Pont de Mauvoisin is a centre for innumerable glacier expeditions and passes, some of which, however, are better undertaken from the Alp of Chermontane, at the extreme head of the valley, or from Lanceet, and are mentioned below.

The first excursion is to the head of the valley and the chalets of Chanrion and Chermontane (see below). The following are the principal expeditions for mountaineers in the chain W. of Val de Bagnes.

The *Col de la Maison Blanche* is a very beautiful glacier pass. It is about 12 hrs. to St. Pierre (7 up, 5 down), crossing the 2 lofty parallel ridges, which enclose the trough of the great *Glacier de Corbassière*. They are connected on the S. by a transverse ridge, on which are the *Grand Combin*, a second point (N.E.) nearly as high, and at the S.W. angle the *Col de la Maison Blanche*. The *Combin de Corbassière* rises over St. Pierre, and farther N. *Les Follats*, here called *Petit Combin*. The ascent lies N.W. from Mauvoisin to the small glacier of *Les Otanes*, and a gap in the ridge above it. From this the rocks are somewhat steep down to the *Corbassière* glacier, which is crossed, and ascended on the W. bank, and close under the snows of the *Grand Combin* to the col, 11,212 ft. The track down is by a very steep rock-couloir to the stream from the *Valsorey Glacier*, by which the way is easy in 1½ hr. to St. Pierre.

Other passes lead across the *Corbassière* Glacier to Orsières. The *Col des Pouvres* reaches the glacier in its middle region. It is then necessary to cross two high ridges, the second is known as the *Col de l'Azet*, or de l'Ane. It is 10 hrs. from Mauvoisin to Val d'Entremont.

The *Grand Combin*, 14,164 ft., known in the Val de Bagnes as the *Gruffencire*, is the giant of this part of the Pennine chain, but so shut in by lofty ridges that it is seldom seen from the adjoining valleys. For this reason, from the confusion of names, and the near neighbourhood of a second peak nearly as high, there has been some difficulty in identifying it. Its ascent from Mauvoisin is long and fatiguing, on account of the broken surface of the ice near the summit. The early

explorers started from the *Chalets of Corbassière*, on rt. bank of the glacier. M. Deville was the first to reach the higher S. peak in 1860. The peak has since been climbed in one day, from St. Pierre and back again, by way of the *Col de la Maison Blanche*. The steep S. face overhanging the *Col du Sonadon* has also been climbed. A shorter route, striking up the face of the mountain before reaching the *Sonadon Gl.*, has also been discovered. The lower peaks round the *Corbassière Gl.* are all attainable.

The two most useful passes to the *Val d'Hérémence* and *Arolla* are the easy *Col de l'heillon*, by the *Gétroz Glacier*, described above (Rte. 131), and the higher *Col de Breneg*. The latter is the finest pass for mountaineers, especially if combined with the ascent of the *Pigne d'Arolla* (under 1 hr. from the col). The glacier is reached from a long grass plateau leading for nearly 3 m. S.S.E. from the path to the *Gétroz chalets*. The N. side of the glacier is ascended, and the icefall, the most likely source of trouble, has been found easy. The col lies between the *Pigne d'Arolla* and the N. end of the *Serpentine* ridge. The easiest descent from the col is by the *Glacier de Cheillon* (see *Pigne d'Arolla*, Rte. 131). The *Col de Chermontane*, leading up the magnificent *Otemma Gl.*, is also a fine pass to *Arolla* (Rte. 131). For the *Col de l'Erêque* and the direct high-level route to Zermatt by that pass and the *Col de Bertol*, see Rte. 131. The most tempting ascent on this side of the valley is perhaps the *Mont Pleureur*, 12,159 ft.: it has been ascended from the *Col de Vasevey* (N. of the Mt.) by passing S. along the ridge, under the highest rocks of *La Salle*, 11,936 ft.

The *Ruinette*, 12,727 ft., and *Mt. Blanc de Cheillon*, 12,700 ft., may be climbed from here as well as from *Lancet* or *Chermontane*.

A series of passes has been described above (Rtes. 129, 130), connecting *Arolla* and Zermatt (St. Ni-

klaus), which deserves notice as affording to ordinary pedestrians a most agreeable and varied introduction to some of the finest scenery of the Alps. Persons able to cross the Col de Cheillon, a pass little harder than the Théodule, may thus go from Martigny to Zermatt, by what may be said to form a *Middle Level Route* between the mountaineers' passes and the Rhone Valley, including in order from the W. the following pleasant halting-places, — Mauvoisin, Arolla, Evolena, Zinal, St. Luc, Zmeiden. Mules may be taken from Arolla to St. Niklaus, and heavier luggage sent by post to any point.

Above Mauvoisin the valley to its head (9 m.) is savage and solitary, a few huts of herdsmen being the only habitations. A  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.'s descent brings the traveller to the waterfall and heap of ice below the Gétroz glacier mentioned above. A little farther are remains of an ice avalanche which fell from the W. side in 1869. Here l. (10 min.) is a bridge and path leading up to the *châlets of Gétroz*, and towards the Cols de Gétroz and du Mont Rouge. The bed of the lake is passed, the cliffs to the l. being beautifully draped with cascades, which float away on the wind. In  $\frac{3}{4}$  hr. the path crosses to the E. bank at the 2 *châlets* of Vingt-huit, above which are the *Glacier de Zessetta* and *Tour de Boussine*, a buttress of the Grand Combin. In another  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr., having recrossed the stream, the traveller looks up the *Glacier de Brency*, descending from the Pigne d'Arolla. [Here l. by a bridge to Chanrion.] Sweep zigzags bring him in  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. to the *Glacier du Mont Durand*, which bars the way, extending to the precipices on the opposite side of the valley. It is easily crossed, even by mules, and in 1 hr. the dirty hovel of 9 m. Chermontane (7316 ft.) is reached, at the foot of the *Glacier d'Attemma*, where mountaineers used to pass the night in the midst of magnificent scenery, but also of mud, pigs, and cattle. On the alp to the E. are the hut and lake of *Chanrion*

(Champ riant?). Near here, at Lancet, a little *Inn* has been opened. The host Gillioz is a good guide.

The following are the chief passes S. and W. from the head of V. de Bagnes.

The route to the *Col du Sonadon* mounts from

Chermontane nearly to the Col de Fenêtre, then across the ridge of Mont Avril to the *Glacier du Mont Durand*, passing its ice-falls along the rocks either of the N. or S. bank. The col lies directly under the cliffs of the Grand Combin, on the ridge connecting that mountain with the watershed of the chain. On the W. side is the chief difficulty. Below the snow-slopes the *Glacier du Sonadon* is descended for about 500 yards, when it becomes impassable. From this point the only course is along the face of steep rocks on the N. side, and down a gully to the lower level of the glacier. Mauvoisin to St. Pierre about 10 hrs.

*Mont Avril*, 10,961 ft., is easily ascended from the Col de Fenêtre, by slopes of *débris*. It commands a splendid view of the Grand Combin.

To the Upper *Valpelline* are the glacier passes of the *Col de la Crête Sèche* and *Col d'Olen* (or de l'Arolla) (Rte. 132).

A rapid ascent by cattle-tracks, with grand view of the frosted ribs of Mont Gelé, brings the traveller in  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from Chermontane to the

3 m. *Col de Fenêtre*, 1941 feet above the sea. Calvin fled by this pass from Aosta in 1541.

"The view towards Italy is wonderfully striking. The Cogne mountains beyond Aosta, and the glaciers of Rutor, are spread out in the distance, and beneath we have the exceeding deep valley of Ollomont, communicating with the *Valpellina*, which is itself a tributary of the *Val d'Aosta*. The col is enclosed by ridges of the most fantastic and savage grandeur, which descend from the mountains on either side; on the N.E. from Mont Combin, rising to a

height of 14,164 ft., and on the S.E. from Mont Gelé, 11,539 ft. high, and almost too steep to bear snow, presenting a perfect ridge of pyramidal aiguilles stretching towards Valpellina."—*Prof. Forbes*.

The course from the Col de Fenêtre to Valpellina is to skirt the base of the jagged ridges of *Mont Gelé*, passing a small lake by a rapid descent to high pastures. The descent is long and fatiguing to Balme, the first hamlet, and to Ollomont, where there are copper-mines, and traces of an aqueduct built by the Romans for the supply of water to Augusta Prætoriorum.

10 m. *Valpelline* (two small Inns), at the entrance of the valley of the same name, and with a fine view of the Becca di Nona and Mt. Emilius. From this village a beautiful carriage-road leads to

8 m. AOSTA. (Rte. 134.)

## ROUTE 137.

MARTIGNY, OR THE ST. BERNARD, TO COURMAYEUR.

- A. BY THE COL DE FERREX.
- B. BY THE COL DE LA FENÊTRE.
- C. BY THE COL DE SERÉNA.

A. *Col de Ferrex*.

Orsières to Courmayeur, 10 to 11 hrs.

The most direct route from Martigny and the Valais to the S. side of Mont Blanc is by the Col de Ferrex. The scenery on the Piedmontese side is fine.

The route from Martigny to Orsières has been described Rte. 135. Char-road from Orsières as far as La Folie, chiefly used by hay-carts. Curiously diminutive cows draw these conveyances.

At Orsières the path turns off on the rt., enters the *Val Ferrex*, which is the name given to the valley on the Swiss

side, as well as to the Piedmontese valley descending from thence towards Courmayeur, and forming, in fact, a continuation of the *Allée Blanche*. The road to the col mounts along the bank of the torrent, and, after pursuing a tolerable road to *Ville d'Isert*, the principal village (40 min.), ascends rapidly towards the higher hamlet of *Praz le Fort* (20 min.) opposite the end of the *Glacier de Saléna*. The mountains which bound the valley towards the W. are lofty, and crowned by those vast glaciers of the chain of Mont Blanc which descend towards the *Val Ferrex*.

Looking back the traveller may notice the *Pierre à Voir*, but there is nothing very remarkable in the scenery of the Swiss *Val Ferrex*. Beyond *Praz le Fort* (25 min.) the rte. begins a long ascent of an undulating green alp, passing numerous hay chalets, and afterwards some forest to

*La Folie* (1 hr. 20 min.), where an opening on the rt. discloses a grand view of the *Glacier de la Neuva*, descending from the rocks which connect *Le Tour Noir* (N.) with *Mont Dolent* (S.), and over which lies the pass of the *Col d'Argentière* (Rte. 142). It is a splendid amphitheatre of rocks and ice, with firs in the foreground, and a remarkable slate wall under Mt. Dolent. Here the path and valley bend to the l., to the

*Châlets de Ferre* (35 min.), with a small chapel, and rich pastures on the mountain sides. About  $\frac{1}{4}$  m. farther, crossing the detritus of a mountain which fell in the year 1776, burying the pasturages of Banderrey, the path divides—straight on for the *Col de la Fenêtre* and the Great St. Bernard, rt. passing the stream and ascending a wild solitary Alp to the

*Col de Ferrex* ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr.), 8716 ft. above the sea.

[A short path leads from *La Folie* to another col, nearer the chain of Mont Blanc, called *Le Petit Ferrex* (8176 ft.). It is not a mule-path, and the distant views are inferior. The paths re-unite at *Pré du Bar*.]

The woods and pasturages of part

of the Swiss Val Ferrex belong to the Convent of the Great St. Bernard.

From the *crest of the Col*, the view along the S.E. side of Mont Blanc, towards Piedmont, is one of the scenes celebrated by Saussure. The eye is carried through the Val Ferrex and the Allée Blanche to the Col de la Seigne, an extent of 20 m. Numerous glaciers are seen on the rt., streaming down into the valley from the ridge of Mont Blanc; but the "Monarch" himself is not seen—the enormous masses of the Grandes Jorasses and the Géant conceal him in this view. In the opposite direction, are the Grand Combin and other mountains at the head of the Val d'Entremont.

The descent is over a soft slaty soil, in which the tracks of cattle have cut deep trenches, in which if a man stand he is half concealed.

25 min. bring a pedestrian to the *Châlets of Pré du Bar* at the foot of the *Glacier du Mont Dolent*, and 20 min. more to the level of the valley, close to the vast moraine of the *Glacier de Triolet*, an ice-stream descending from the *Mt. Dolent* and *Aig. de Triolet*.

The road now runs amidst rocks and stones and bushes, and commands a wild scene of Alpine desolation. The valley is narrow, flat, and marshy, and each rift on the mountain side towards Mont Blanc has its glacier hanging from the summit. Not less than 6 distinct glaciers are passed in the course of this valley before reaching the village of Entrèves, near Courmayeur, viz., Gl. du Mont Dolent, Gl. de Triolet, Gl. des Petites Jorasses, Gl. des Grandes Jorasses, Gl. de Rocheford, Gl. du Mt. Frety. Three depend from the Grandes and Petites Jorasses, and the remarkable peak of the Géant. A few miserable villages are passed. The highest is *Gruetta* (1½ hr. from the col); those below, *La Vachey*, *Praz Nc*, and *Neiron*. About 2 m. below Neiron the path divides in a fir-wood—straight on by Entrèves; L, crossing the stream, and by a shorter rte. to Courmayeur. More than half the length of the valley is

passed, on the descent, before Mont Blanc is seen. When its prodigious mass opens to the view, the effect is overwhelming. Taking the L. of the two paths, and passing under the rocks of *Mont de la Saxe*, the pedestrian, in 1½ hr. from Gruetta reaches *Courmayeur* (Rte. 134).

#### B. Col de la Fenêtre.

By allowing 2 easy days for the journey from Martigny to Courmayeur the pedestrian may combine a visit to the St. Bernard with the view of the Allée Blanche from the Col de Ferrex, which is one of the striking scenes in the tour of Mont Blanc. Going on the first day to the Hospice of the St. Bernard (Rte. 135), he may take a guide to lead him thence by the *Col de la Fenêtre* (8855 ft.) to the head of the Swiss Val Ferrex. The way is pretty well traced; but a little fresh snow would be sufficient to conceal it, when it would be very difficult to find the true direction. 3½ hrs. suffice to reach the point where this path leads into the ordinary route from Orsières to the Col de Ferrex, about an hour below the summit of that pass.

#### C. Col de la Seréna.

This is the shortest route for pedestrians from the Great St. Bernard to Courmayeur. It is not, however, a very interesting pass. A path turns to the rt. close to the Vacherie of the Hospice, and, winding round the slopes of the mountain, reaches the chalet at the foot of the Col de Seréna, where it joins the regular track. This is a considerable short-cut, but is fatiguing, and requires a local guide. A good walker may easily get to Courmayeur this way in 7 hrs. The ordinary route, which is passable for mules, descends as far as St. Remy. It there turns rt. to the village of *Bosses*, and runs through fields for ½ hr. to the foot of the col. From that point it is a ½ hr.'s ascent through a pine-forest to the last chalet, where milk and cheese may be obtained, as

long as the cows are on the mountain. Here, instead of following a road to the rt., go up the mountain by a zigzag path immediately *behind* the chalet, and 1½ hr.'s good walking will land you on the Col (7385 ft.). This part of the road is exceedingly steep, but the view from the summit well rewards your labour. The scenery is very wild, especially towards the N. and N.W., offering a great contrast to the beautifully cultivated valley of Aosta, which shortly afterwards (just above the village of *Morge*) you see extended at your feet. From *Morge* to *Morgex*, on the high road between Aosta and Courmayeur (Rte. 134), is a walk down a stony path of about ½ hr. Thence to Courmayeur 2 hrs.' walk; in all about 9 hrs. from the Hospice. The *Seréna* abounds with ptarmigan.

There is another pass from the hospice, called the *Col de St. Remy*, by which the Piedmontese Val Ferrex may be reached. There is no advantage in this. It is longer than the *Seréna*, and you lose the view of the *Allée Blanche* from the *Col de Ferrex*.

### ROUTE 138.

#### GENEVA TO CHAMONIX.

| Geneva.              | Eng. m. |
|----------------------|---------|
| Bonneville . . . . . | 15      |
| Cluses . . . . .     | 9       |
| Sallanches . . . . . | 9       |
| Chamonix . . . . .   | 16      |

A finely-constructed carriage-road has been completed by the French Government between Sallanches and Chamonix, so that *diligences* (several daily) now run through from Geneva, reaching St. Martin and Sallanches in about 6 hrs., Chamonix in about 9 hrs. The diligences are open, with rows of seats—what the French call *char-à-bancs*—and the pace is fast. The diligence will take any number of passengers booked the day beforehand, and a corresponding number of *char-à-bancs* are despatched. The office is on the Grand Quai. Seats vary from 18 to 24 fr., but sometimes, owing to the competition of rival car-owners, may be obtained for even less.

Ascertain whether the service goes through without delay at Sallanches. On no account pay for the double journey, to return to Geneva. There are other routes from Chamonix of great interest, one of them (Rte. 141) a car-road.

*Excursion tickets* may be obtained through Sallanches, returning by Martigny, or vice versa.

From Geneva to Chamonix 45 fr. are charged for a 1-horse carriage; a pair-horse carriage takes 4 passengers at post prices.

Geneva is left for Chamonix by the Grande Place and the new quarter on the site of the levelled *Porte de Rive*. For some miles the road is lined with villas and gardens.

*Chêne*—on the Seime—a large village. The road offers some fine views of the *Voirons* l., of Mont Salève, the picturesque red Château de Mornex, and the range of the Jura rt. Soon after leaving *Chêne*, the road crosses a little stream, the *Foron*, which has its source in the *Voirons*, and is the boundary between the canton of Geneva and Savoy. There is no customs examination, as Haute Savoie was made a "free zone," at the time of the French annexation. A little beyond it, is *Annemasse*. From the first rising ground, the *Môle*, a conical mountain, is seen in all its height, 6128 ft., partly concealing the hollow through which the course to Chamonix lies.

Beyond *Annemasse* the road runs up the valley of the *Arve*, in which the blanchéd stones mark by their breadth how furious the river must be at times. A new road, well engineered, and a handsome lofty bridge, effect the passage of the *Menoge*, nearly on a level, avoiding the arduous descent and ascent of the old road. It next passes over an elevated country to

The village of *Nangy*. A little beyond there are some ruins on the right; and, after passing *Contamines*, are seen those of the *Château of Faucigny*, which gives its name to the province of *Faucigny*. The road now passes so near the *Môle*, that this





mountain is an imposing and beautiful object. Beyond Contamines the road declines. The mountains which bound the Arve present a bold aspect, and the entrance is striking, through an avenue of trees, to

*Bonneville* (Inns: Couronne; Balances), before the annexation to France the chief place in the province of Faucigny; it is in the diocese of Annecy, and had a prefecture. The population, once 3000, has dwindled to 1500. The top of the Môle may be reached in 3½ hrs.

[Rt. a carriage-road leads over the hills to Annecy; thence Railway to Aix les Bains (Rte. 152).]

A more beautiful rte. is by the valleys of the Borne and Thones:—to *Entremont* (an Inn) 10 m.; to *Col de St. Jean de Sixt* 3 m.; to *Thones* (an inn) 5½ m.; to Annecy 12 m. (Rte. 150).]

At the end of the stone bridge—built 1753—over the Arve, is a Column erected in honour of Carlo Felice, and in gratitude for his having added to the security of the town by the formation of strong embankments, to restrain the furious Arve. It is surmounted by a statue of the King, and is 95 feet high.

The road now lies between the Môle and *Mont Brezon*, 6031 ft., which on the S. bounds the valley of the Arve, here rich in cultivation. After some time, the valley widens, and the Arve is joined by the Giffre, which, descending from the Buet, flows through the valley of Sixt. On the l., on a col, is *Châtillon*, through which lies the carriage-road to the valley of Sixt (Rte. 143).

[To the rt., before reaching Cluses, the entrance to the *Vallee du Reposeir* is passed. In 1½ hr. from the high road the *Chartreuse du Reposeir* is reached. A good walker may, after spending the night here, climb (5 to 6 hrs.) the *Aiguille Perrée du Reposeir* (9209 ft.), which, as Mr. L. Stephen has pointed out, is so placed as to command the finest possible view of the W. side of Mont Blanc, towering above the basin of Sallanches. The climb is a rough one,

and requires local knowledge. Pessey-Girod, to be heard of at the *Chartreuse*, is a good guide. It is possible, with knowledge of the ground, to descend to Sallanches.]

*Cluses* (1600 ft.) (Inns: Parfaite Union; Ecu de France), an old town, Pop. 1600—almost burnt down in 1844, and rebuilt away from the mouth of the gorge in which it originally stood. The wind issuing from this opening used to foment any fire into a conflagration, and from this cause Cluses has suffered many times.

Its inhabitants are employed in watchmaking, but for this Cluses was more celebrated in the last century.

On leaving Cluses, the road is carried through the defile bounded l. by the limestone *Chaine des Frêtes*. The valley is very narrow, nearly all the way to Magland, and, in some places, the road is hemmed in between the river and the precipices, which actually overhang the traveller. The banks are well wooded, and the scenery beautiful.

Before arriving at Magland, the cliffs on the left retire a little, forming an amphitheatre, which is filled, nearly half-way up, with the debris of the mountain. At the top of this talus, 800 feet above the valley, is the *Grotto of Balme*, to which a bridle-path leads. At the hamlet of *La Balme*, mules are kept for a visit to the grotto (adm. 3 fr.). The cave enters the mountain more than 1800 feet; but the view from its mouth, owing to the narrowness of the valley, is limited. The peaks, however, of *Mont Douron*, on the other side of the valley, are remarkably fine in form.

*Magland* lies below the lofty mountains on the right bank of the Arve; the commune, which is straggling, contains nearly as many inhabitants as Cluses. About 1½ league beyond Magland, the road passes close to one of the highest waterfalls in Savoy, that of *Nant d'Arpenaz*; the stream is small, and before it reaches half its first descent it is broken into spray, yet its shape is graceful, and after

being nearly dissipated and dispersed over the face of the precipice, it reforms on the slope, and rushing across the road beneath a bridge, it flows into the Arve. The rock of brown limestone, from which it descends, is remarkable for its tortuous stratification, forming a vast curve.

[To Sixt by the *Col d'Arberon*, in Rte. 143.]

Beyond Magland the valley increases in width, and rich fields spread up the base of the Douron; on the l. the *Aiguille de Varens*, or *Véran*, rises 8975 ft. above the sea.

*St. Martin* (Inns: *Hôtel du Mont Blanc*, good; *Hotel des Grandes Alpes*; *Croix Blanche*).

[The *Aig. de Varens* may be ascended from here, a severe climb of 5 hrs. For passes from St. Martin to Sixt, see Rte. 143.]

Here, in former days, the diligence stopped, and travellers had to proceed in charrs. The valley of Chamonix, like many others, is shut in by a rocky mass, through which the stream cuts its way in a deep ravine. The old rough car-road kept to the (true) rt. bank of the river, and ascended by Chède and *Servoz* (Inns: *Univers*; *Balance*). [From this a mule-path, the *Col d'Anterne*, leads to the valley of Sixt, Rte. 143.] It crossed the Arve in the middle of the ravine by a bridge known as the *Pont Pelissier*, and reached the valley of Chamonix by a very steep and rough ascent called *Les Montets*.

The new road keeps to the left bank, and is a fine example of the costly but splendid engineering works of the second Empire. It crosses the Arve, to Sallanches, half a mile from St. Martin. From this bridge there is a noble view of *Mont Blanc*: the actual distance is more than 12 miles in a direct line, yet so sharp, and bright, and clear is every part of the stupendous mountain, that one unused to such scenes will think it much nearer. On looking up the valley over the broad winter-bed of the Arve, however, objects recede, and give the accustomed impressions of

distance: above the Arve rises the *Forclaz*, its sides clothed with pines, and its summit with pasturage. Beyond these green heights is seen the summit of *Mont Blanc*. To the l. of it the *Aiguille du Gouté* and *Dome du Gouté*; to the rt. the *Aiguille de Miage* and glaciers of *Bionassay* and *Miage*.

*Sallanches* (Inns: *Bellevue*; *H. du Leman*; *Châlet Suisse*), about 34 m. from Geneva, is a little town of wide, straight streets containing about 2000 Inhab., risen out of the ashes of one which was totally destroyed by fire on Good Friday, 1840. It broke out while everybody was at church, and thus got ahead before it could be checked. Many lives were lost. The diligences stop to dine here.

*Mont Blanc* is well seen from the road to *Albertville*, particularly from *Combloux*, about 1 hr.'s ascent. See Rte. 150; but the best view of all is from the slopes of

*Mt. Fleuri*, N.W. of *Sallanches*. Almost every summit of the chain is seen, as well as the whole 14,000 ft. of ascent from *Sallanches*. The height and distance of *Mt. Fleuri* are just sufficient to show the mountain in its fair proportions.

The new road rises gradually to the pretty village *Fayeux* (*H. des Alpes*, *H. Bon Nant*), at the entrance of the ravine of the *Bon Nant*, in which lie the baths of St. Gervais, about  $\frac{1}{4}$  m. from the road.

*Baths of St. Gervais* (*Établissement Thermal*, pension and bath, exclusive of service and bougie, 9 fr. a day, a very large establishment in the narrow ravine) (2060 ft., *H. du Mont Joli*, or *H. du Mt. Blanc*, in the village, 600 ft. above the baths.) The valley is beautiful, and there are delightful walks for the convalescent. The waters are at 105° Fahr.—the heat of Bath with the qualities of Harrogate: they contain iron and sulphur. A little way up the glen is the *Cascade du Bon Nant*, which, though small, is extremely pretty. In the view from above it, the higher Alps are concealed; but the lime-

stone range of the Aiguille de Varens, is singularly picturesque in outline and detail.

The glen is a *cul-de-sac*; carriages must return to the entrance, where a very steep road leads up to the village of

*St. Gervais*, in Val Montjoie (*Inns*: H. du Mont Joli, 2680 ft. above the sea; pension 7 fr. a day, and excellent; H. du Mt. Blanc, also good; H. de Genève, de l'Union, de Prarion), through which the Bon Nant flows, until it falls into the gulf behind the baths. This road continues through the villages of Bionnay, Champel, and Villette to Contamines, on the way to the Bonhomme. (Rte. 139.)

From *St. Gervais* to *Les Houches* are 2 mountain mule-paths—by the *Col de Voza*, a pass of great interest, on account of its noble view of the chain of Mont Blanc, 5 hrs.' walk; by the *Col de la Forclaz*, shorter, but less interesting.]

The road now ascends into the ravine of the Arve. It is carried along a shelf cut out of a rocky slope. The "Restaurant du Châtelard" stands in a charming grassy glade, described in its primitive quietness, when it was far from any road, by Mr. Ruskin. At the H. des Montets the old road from Servoz falls in. The defile grows narrower and steeper. The snows of the Dôme du Goutér are a magnificent object in the background.

The road twice crosses the river, and enters the comparatively level meadows of the valley of Chamonix. The enormous mass of Mont Blanc, now in close proximity, is superb; but the summit can no longer be seen; it is concealed by the Dôme du Goutér, and the white glaciers (§ 12) are seen streaming towards the valley.

*Les Houches* (small Inn: Vue des Glaciers), the first village, in the valley, and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  m. from Chamonix.

[Here diverges the path over the Col de Voza to *St. Gervais* or Con-

tamines, and to the Col du Bonhomme (Rte. 139).]

The first glacier is that of *Taconnay*; it is, however, so mere a line in comparison with surrounding objects, that the traveller will probably be disappointed in its apparent size. Numerous torrents are passed, descending furiously from the glaciers, and cutting deep channels.

Beyond the glacier of *Taconnay* is the hamlet of *Les Bossons* (*Inns*: Vue des Glaciers; Restaurant des Alpes),  $2\frac{1}{2}$  m. from *Les Houches*, and opposite the *Glacier des Bossons*, which formerly protruded its tongue of clear blue ice far into the valley, but has lately, like the other glaciers of the Mount Blanc chain, retreated, leaving behind it unsightly rubbish mounds.

A little above *Les Bossons* Chamonix is seen, and beyond it the end of the *Glacier des Bois*.

CHAMONIX. *Inns*: H. d'Angleterre et Londres; Impérial; Couronne; Royal de l'Union; Palais de Cristal—all excellent houses in the hands of one company; in each the table-d'hôte is at a different time, so that the guest may choose his own hour for dinner, by giving notice to the waiter of the hotel he sleeps in at which house he intends to dine. The Union and Palais de Cristal are rather cheaper, e.g. dinner  $4\frac{1}{2}$  fr. instead of 5, and the rooms are less, but are not so good. H. du Mont Blanc, des Alpes, as good; H. Couttet, just outside the village, quiet and comfortable, frequented by climbers.

In August and September these inns are frequently so full that travellers arriving at night have difficulty in obtaining accommodation. Mineral warm baths near H. de Londres, offer a refreshing and agreeable luxury after the fatigue of mountain excursions.

The *English Church*, a neat building, holding 200 persons, stands outside the village on the road to the Montanvers.

M. Loppé, whose ice and snow-scenes are familiar to most Londoners,

has a gallery of *Alpine paintings*, which is well worth a visit.

Kéhrlri Frères and Venance Payot keep a shop for the sale of carved wood, polished stones, crystals, &c.

A monument to J. Balmat, the first climber of Mont Blanc, was erected in 1878 before the church.

*Chamonix*, 3446 ft. above the sea, displays almost the bustle of an English watering-place in what was once a retired Alpine valley. A great part of the village was burnt in 1855, and it has lost its pristine simplicity.

Chamonix, Chamouni or *Le Prieuré*, as it was formerly called, from a Benedictine Priory, established here about the end of the 11th cent., was known earlier than is generally imagined. The original act for founding the priory bears the seal of Count Aymon, and a reference to "Papa Urbano" (Pope Urban II.), which fixes the date between 1088 and 1099—probably about 1090. This deed conferred a grant of the Vale of Chamonix, from the Col de Balme to the torrent of the Dioza near Servoz. From this document the origin of the name may be discovered. The words *Campus Munitus*, champ muni, or fortified field, come, perhaps, from the mountain boundaries? The first recorded visit of the Bishop of Geneva, within whose diocese Chamonix lay, was in 1443; when, after a sojourn with the abbot of Sallanches, he continued his arduous journey, accompanied by the abbot, his 2 officiating clerical attendants, and some menials, all on foot, arriving at Chamonix, as late as Oct. 4. In 1606 St. François de Sales penetrated into this remote corner of his diocese.

In May, 1669, a treasury official named Le Pays wrote from "Chamony, en Fossigny," to a lady of his acquaintance the first description we have of the five glaciers of Chamonix: "Enfin, madame, je voy ici cinq montagnes, qui vous ressemblent comme si c'estoit vous-meme . . . cinq montagnes qui sont de glace toute pure depuis la teste jusqu'au pieds . . . Au reste rien n'est si

magnifique que ces montagnes quand elles recoivent les rayons du soleil."

The existence of Chamonix was clearly not a discovery of Wyndham and Pocock. The inhabitants of the valley had long had much intercourse with their neighbours, and their fairs, held at the priory, brought many strangers. The *ordonnance* for establishing these fairs was granted by Philip of Savoy, Count of Geneva, and bears date 1530, and 3 years later he gave permission for the establishment of a weekly market, which still exists. Nothing, however, was known of the scenery of Mont Blanc, and even at Geneva, it was a matter of dispute whether the great snowy masses (Les Glacières) seen on the horizon lay N. or S. of the valley of Chamonix, and even in some maps they were placed to the W. It was Messrs. Wyndham and Pocock's excursion to Chamonix, in 1741, and their report of it to the *Royal Society*, which drew general attention to the sublime scenery of Mont Blanc. They are still held in honour at Chamonix. The stone where they are erroneously supposed to have slept at the side of the Mer de Glace was called Pierre des Anglais, and, having been broken by a shepherd's fire, another was placed there with the inscription "Pocock et Wyndham, 1741." Saussure first visited Chamonix in 1760.

The guides, mules, and all affairs connected with them are regulated by the state. They are placed under the management of a *guîte chef*, and ruled by a code of laws and tariff of charges. The regulations have been often modified, and the Alpine Club (whose members are especially exempted) has made great exertions to do away with the tiresome restrictions placed on other travellers, and to raise the standard of the men enrolled as guides. These endeavours have been only partially successful; guides are still enrolled with insufficient qualifications, and inexperienced travellers, desirous of making high ascents, should always endeavour to obtain

the advice of some mountaineer in selecting guides from the list. The recognition of the traveller's right to such free choice is the principal reform which has been introduced. It is granted,

1. To travellers who desire to undertake "extraordinary" expeditions.

2. Who are engaged in scientific pursuits.

3. Who do not know French, and require a guide to speak a language they know.

4. Who desire to re-engage a guide they have had in former years.

5. Ladies, unaccompanied by a gentleman.

There are few who cannot place themselves under one of these heads. Travellers are at liberty to employ the guides they have brought with them from other districts. To the bureau of the *guide chef* application must be made personally for guides, but his recommendations cannot always be relied on. Those of hotel porters, sometimes bribed by inferior guides, are particularly to be mistrusted. The men are inscribed in a book, and where no choice is made each takes his turn (*tour de rôle*).

The Chamonix men were the first in the Alps to learn and practise ice-raft—and this for many years gave them a deserved reputation. They may claim to have been the inventors of the art of mountaineering. But of late years some sad accidents, and many less conspicuous instances of incapacity, misconduct, and greed of gain on the part of its members, have lowered the reputation of the Corporation of Guides. At the present time its control has passed into the hands of the mule-drivers who compose the majority of its members, and its rules are used by them to harass the few good glacier guides to whom it owes such credit as it still retains. The following guides are selected from the list as among the best, and are placed in alphabetical order. The letters O. Z. E. and D., following the names, indicate that they have travelled in the Oberland, Zermatt, Engadine, or Dauphiné districts :

Benôit, Simon. Bellin, Marc (D.). Cachat, Jean Pierre (O. Z.). Cachat, Joseph (Z.). Cupelin, Edouard (D. O. Z.). Croz, Jean Baptiste (O. Z. E.). Devouassoud, François J. (knows most parts of the Alps and N. Italy), his brothers Henri (D. O. Z. E.), and Michel (D. O. Z.). Folliquet, Michel (Z.). Folliquet, Adolphe (Z., Tarentaise). Payot, Michel (1), (O. Z. E.). Payot, Michel (2), Frédéric and Alphonse, brothers (O. Z.). Simond, François (D.). Simond, Joseph Basile (O. Z.). Tournier, Alexandre (O. Z. E.). Thirraz, Tobie (O. Z. E., Tyrol). The following are older men who have travelled with families in Switzerland, Tyrol, and N. Italy:—Balmat, Auguste; Cachat, François; Devouassoud, Joseph; Fühel, François; Frasseraud, Michel Ambroise; Thirraz, Michel.

A fresh revision of the rules, made in the interest of travellers, and under the supervision of the French Alpine Club, is under discussion. Its effect, if adopted, will be to establish some classification among the guides and a more efficient control than that of the present Bureau.

The *Excursions* are divided into *Courses Ordinaires* and *Extraordinaires*, for all of which there are charges fixed by tariff, which the traveller can obtain at the bureau. For the ascent of Mont Blanc the charge is 100 francs. Grands Mulets and back, 20 fr. Col du Géant and back, 40 fr. Jardin, 12 fr. Buet, 15 fr. Ordinary days' walk, 8 to 12 fr.

In the view from Chamonix *Mont Blanc*, 15,871 ft., is seen to the S., and the ridge descending from it through the *Bosses du Dromadaire*, 14,947 ft., the *Dôme du Goûter*, 14,210 ft., to the *Aiguille du Goûter*, 12,707 ft. Overhead is the *Aiguille du Midi*, 12,608 ft., and S.E., between it and the *Aiguille de Charmoz*, 11,293 ft., a range of *aiguilles* streaming with small glaciers, and the elevated plateau called *Plan des Aiguilles*. On the N. side of the valley are the *Brévent* over Chamonix and the *Aiguilles Rouges* opposite the Glacier des Bois.

Mr. Adams Reilly's Map of Mont

Blanc will be found clear and useful in this neighbourhood.

#### EXCURSIONS ROUND CHAMONIX.

The best excursions for ordinary tourists, who can ride and walk a short distance, are—1, the Montanvers, returning by Mer de Glace and Chapeau; 2, the Plan Praz and the Flégère (including, if possible, the Brévent); 3, the Glacier des Bossons and Pierre Pointue. Fair walkers will visit the Jardin and Grands Mulets and, perhaps, cross the A. des Grands Montets from the Montanvers to Argentière, and ascend the Buet.

a. *Pierre Pointue, Cascade du Dard*.—When cloudy weather forbids your thinking of excursions in which a distant view is the chief object, a visit to the *Cascade du Dard* and *Glacier des Bossons* may be made.

Cross the bridge and turn to the rt., past H. Couttet, and in less than 10 min. you will find the path divide at the second cluster of cottages. Take the l. or upper one, and bear to the l. towards and through a pine-wood in a slanting and southerly direction. The path is tolerably clear, and leads to the edge of a ravine of large boulders of granite, through which the stream which feeds and flows from the cascade, runs. Do not cross this stream, but keep up its near side, and you will soon see the chalet of the cascade: clean, and cheap refreshments. Then descend to the bottom of the fall by a path at the corner of the chalet. The situation is charming. You may extend the walk  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an hr. through a wood to the *Glacier des Bossons*. Ladies can cross the level portion of the ice, but its pinnacles, which 20 years ago were most imposing, have now sunk, and the excursion has lost much of its interest. From the *Cascade du Dard* a bridle-path mounts in about 2 hrs. by a steep but safe ascent to the *Parillon de Pierre Pointue* (a small deer Inn, with 2 beds, kept by Sylvain

Couttet the guide), which is the first stage on the route to the summit of Mt. Blanc. This is a delightful walk, for the most part through a pine-forest, and near the edge of a wild ravine, which descends from the *Glacier des Bossons*. The little *Inn* (6721 ft.) is perched on a commanding terrace below the *Aig. du Midi*, and the near view from it of the torn surface of the *Glacier des Bossons* is magnificent. Beyond rise the black crags of the *Grands Mulets*, and from that point the eye follows the rte. up the snows towards Mont Blanc. 40 min. higher, by a rough foot-track, is the *Pierre à l'Echelle*, where a ladder used to be left for crossing the glacier (2 hrs. to the *Grands Mulets*). From *Pierre Pointue* good walkers can ascend to the *Plan des Aiguilles*, and return to Chamonix by the Montanvers.

b. *The Montanvers* (correctly Montanvers. The pasturage at the back).—This is the most popular excursion from Chamonix. The object is to visit the *Mer de Glace*, which terminates in the *Glacier des Bois*. There is a good mule-road, and the *Inn* on the Montanvers may be reached riding in 2 hrs.: to descend takes about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. No occasion for a guide, as the way cannot be missed. After crossing the Arve at Chamonix the path turns to the l., passing the English church, and running up the flat valley nearly half a mile to the foot of the mountain. From that point it rises rapidly in zigzags through the forest. Occasional openings reveal the valley of the Arve, the Flégère and Brévent marking the height which is rapidly attained. The *Aiguille du Dru* rises magnificently above the pine-tops. A few more zigzags, and the Mer de Glace and its wonderful scenery open on the traveller.

Here, on a promontory 280 ft. above the ice, and 6302 ft. above the sea, stood for long a little *Inn*, now (1879) superseded by a large hotel, constructed apparently with the object of producing the closest possible resemblance to a prison and the

greatest possible disfigurement to the landscape. The former modest inn had in its turn succeeded to the rude hut, composed of a boulder stone and dry wall turfed over, beneath which Saussure slept, and to the regularly built cabin, called "Château de Blair," from the Englishman who erected it, 1778-81. The little temple erected, "à la Nature," by a disciple of Rousseau, was long used as a drinking-room for the muleteers. It was here that the professors Forbes and Tyndall spent, at different times, many weeks while investigating the theory of glacier motion, and the latter some days in the depth of winter, when the men he employed were waist-deep, sometimes shoulder-deep, in the snow. The Inn is a good station for visiting the higher part of the Mer de Glace, Jardin, &c. Directly below it is the Pierre des Anglais, inscribed with the names of Pocock and Wyndham.

From the Montanvers the broken, winding glacier is seen extending 5 m. to the serrated wall of the *Grandes* and *Petites Jorasses*. The Mer de Glace, properly so-called, terminates in about 2 m., at a point where it receives its affluents—the *Glacier du Géant* from the W., the *Glacier de Talèfre* from the E., the *Glacier de Léchaud* from the S. On the E., opposite the Montanvers, the sky is pierced by that surprising obelisk the *Aiguille du Dru*, 12,515 ft. a supporter of the greater *Aig. Verte*, rising behind it 13,540 ft., but from here partially concealed. Farther on is the *Aig. du Moine*, 11,214 ft., whose rocky foot at the junction of the glaciers of Talèfre and Léchaud is called the *Courcrole*. On the W. is the *Aig. de Charmoz*, 11,293 ft., with a singular gap and pinnacle on its shoulder. The rocks at its E. base are called *Tréluporte*. Farther on, beyond the *Glacier du Géant*, are *Le Tucul*, *Les Périakès*, and *Mont Mulet* (patois for *Maurais*), 13,073 ft.

The regular round from the Montanvers is to cross the Mer de Glace and descend on the other side by the *Chapeau* (g) and *Source of the Arveiron* (f) (guide 9 fr.), the mules being

[Switz.]

dismissed, or sent to the valley to meet the travellers; but few think of first walking a little way along the path from the inn by the glacier side. It is surprising how quickly the scene changes and grows, if possible, in magnificence, and the track is quite safe and easy. Still fewer think of extending the excursion along the Mer de Glace to the opening where the ice-streams meet (7190 ft.) This walk is somewhat fatiguing, and not to be attempted by tourists without a guide, but it is in no sense difficult. "To feel the true mountain spirit," says Mr. Leslie Stephen, "a man must go into the heart of the mountains: he cannot know what the sea is like by standing on the shore."

Travellers who return direct to Chamonix, if they are strangers to glacier ice, should at any rate first descend upon the Mer de Glace to obtain some idea of the character of its ridged surface, which cannot be well seen from the heights, and to observe close at hand the intense blue colour in the crevasses. From the inns a steep path leads down to the moraine. Those who descend by the Chapeau cross the glacier where the ice for a short distance is smooth and easily traversed. The passage is daily made in summer by hundreds of people, and no serious accident ever happens. The rocks above the ice on the Chapeau side are steep and smooth, but the ledge by which they are traversed has been widened and provided with handrails, so as no longer to deserve its old name of "Le Mauvais Pas."

c. *The Jardin*. Guide 9 fr.—Those who wish to ascend the Mer de Glace, and visit the Jardin, on the *Glacier de Talèfre*, may either sleep at the Montanvers, or shorten the walk by riding thus far from Chamonix. From the Montanvers it is a walk of 4 hrs. to the Jardin, and 3 to return. This is a most beautiful glacier excursion, free from danger, and so easy as to be suited to ladies, who may thus gain an insight into the glories of the higher Alps. A guide is necessary. The object of the excursion is to enter

into the heart of the Mont Blanc range, and form a correct idea of its snowy solitudes.

The way now generally followed lies S. of the ice-fall of the Talèfre Glacier, passing a rude hut, in a disgraceful state of disrepair (1878), at a spot known as the Pierre à Béranger, principally used by climbers attacking the Aiguille Verte. The *Jardin* is a slope about 7 acres in extent, and between 9000 and 9500 ft. above the sea. Around it spreads the oval basin of the Glacier de Talèfre, under the formidable walls of *Les Droites* and *Les Courtes*, which connect the Aig. Verte with the Aig. de Triolet. N.W. rises the Aig. du Moine, S.E. the Aig. de Talèfre. Nothing can well exceed the grandeur of such a spot, amidst the eternal snows of Mont Blanc, surrounded on all sides by the host of aiguilles. Piercing the blue of heaven, yet overtopped by one supreme and glittering summit, they vindicate the truth of the poet's description,—

"Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;  
They crown'd him long ago,  
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,  
With a diadem of snow."

Rare plants and minerals may be collected; the former on the Egralets and Jardin, the latter on the moraines of the Glacier de Talèfre, and the E. side of the Mer de Glace.

If the traveller be not pressed for time and have a taste for such sublime scenes, he may sleep at the Montanvers, and next morning, instead of returning by the beaten road to Chamonix, explore the bases of the Aiguilles between the Mer de Glace and Mont Blanc, descending either by the Glacier des Pêlerins and Pierre Pointue, or by the mule-path from the *Plan des Aiguilles*. If by the former, he will gain an admirable view of the Glacier des Bossons at the point where it is passed to the Grands Mulets, in the ascent of Mont Blanc, and he will obtain some idea of the difficulties to be encountered, and the magnificence of the scenes to be enjoyed, in that expedition. A list of plants found on the Jardin was published by Dr.

Percy, in the 'Trans. of the Edinburgh Bot. Soc.' for 1836.

d. *The Aiguille des Grands Montets*.—This is the blunt summit which rises E. of the Mer de Glace between it and the Gl. d'Argentière. It is easy of access for fair walkers with guides and the views obtained during the expedition are equal to any in this district. It is possible to descend by the *Châlets of Les Ognons* to Argentière, 7 or 8 hrs. from the Montanvers.

e. *Plan Praz, the Brévent, and the Flégère*.—The admirable views of the chain of Mont Blanc, gained on this route, make it one of the indispensable excursions from Chamonix. (Guide 10 fr.)

The excellent mule-path to Sixt, which begins at the church of Chamonix, is ascended through forest for about 1 hr. to the *Châlet des Chabettes*, a good point of view, and for another hour up a stony slope to the little *Inn* at *Plan-Praz* on a pasture terrace 6959 ft. above the sea. This is a ride of 2½ hrs. from Chamonix. Mules are left here to await their return by those who ascend the Brévent, an hour and a half's easy walk. The path up the *Cheminée*, a steep rocky gully, has been so much improved as to offer no difficulty. The Brévent, 8283 ft. above the sea, has the finest of the near views of the summit of Mont Blanc, with its neighbours the *Mont Maudit* and *Mont Blanc du Tacul* to the E.; the *Bosses du Dromadaire*, *Dôme du Gouter*, and *Aig. du Gouter*, 12,707 ft. on the W.; and the great *Glaciers des Bossons* and du *Taconay* streaming down in the centre. On the N.W. is seen the wild ruinous range of the *Rochers des Fys*, from the *Aig. de Vurens*, over *Servoz*, to the *Pointe de Salles* (9089 ft.), over Sixt; to the E. the *Col de Balme*, to the S.W. the *Col de Voza*, and beyond it *Mont Joli*.

The return to Chamonix may be made by the W. side of the Brévent, above the valley of Dioza, near a little lake; then, descending by the *châlets* of *Carlavéron* to *les Houches*, at the entrance of the valley of Chamonix; or the traveller may descend to *Servoz* or *Sixt*.



THE CHAIN OF MONT BLANC AS SEEN FROM THE DEÉVERT.

- |                         |                         |                          |                              |                         |                          |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Argenteau-Basque     | 21. Argenteau du Tiro   | 31. Village de Lanchet   | 41. Les Chalets de la Vallée | 51. Vallée de la Vallée | 61. Village de la Vallée | 71. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 2. Colonne de la Vallée | 22. Vallée de la Vallée | 32. Les Chalets          | 42. Argenteau du Tiro        | 52. Vallée de la Vallée | 62. Vallée de la Vallée  | 72. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 3. Vallée de la Vallée  | 23. Argenteau du Tiro   | 33. Village de la Vallée | 43. Vallée de la Vallée      | 53. Vallée de la Vallée | 63. Vallée de la Vallée  | 73. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 4. Vallée de la Vallée  | 24. Argenteau du Tiro   | 34. Village de la Vallée | 44. Vallée de la Vallée      | 54. Vallée de la Vallée | 64. Vallée de la Vallée  | 74. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 5. Vallée de la Vallée  | 25. Argenteau du Tiro   | 35. Village de la Vallée | 45. Vallée de la Vallée      | 55. Vallée de la Vallée | 65. Vallée de la Vallée  | 75. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 6. Vallée de la Vallée  | 26. Argenteau du Tiro   | 36. Village de la Vallée | 46. Vallée de la Vallée      | 56. Vallée de la Vallée | 66. Vallée de la Vallée  | 76. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 7. Vallée de la Vallée  | 27. Argenteau du Tiro   | 37. Village de la Vallée | 47. Vallée de la Vallée      | 57. Vallée de la Vallée | 67. Vallée de la Vallée  | 77. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 8. Vallée de la Vallée  | 28. Argenteau du Tiro   | 38. Village de la Vallée | 48. Vallée de la Vallée      | 58. Vallée de la Vallée | 68. Vallée de la Vallée  | 78. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 9. Vallée de la Vallée  | 29. Argenteau du Tiro   | 39. Village de la Vallée | 49. Vallée de la Vallée      | 59. Vallée de la Vallée | 69. Vallée de la Vallée  | 79. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 10. Vallée de la Vallée | 30. Argenteau du Tiro   | 40. Village de la Vallée | 50. Vallée de la Vallée      | 60. Vallée de la Vallée | 70. Vallée de la Vallée  | 80. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 11. Vallée de la Vallée | 31. Argenteau du Tiro   | 41. Village de la Vallée | 51. Vallée de la Vallée      | 61. Vallée de la Vallée | 71. Vallée de la Vallée  | 81. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 12. Vallée de la Vallée | 32. Argenteau du Tiro   | 42. Village de la Vallée | 52. Vallée de la Vallée      | 62. Vallée de la Vallée | 72. Vallée de la Vallée  | 82. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 13. Vallée de la Vallée | 33. Argenteau du Tiro   | 43. Village de la Vallée | 53. Vallée de la Vallée      | 63. Vallée de la Vallée | 73. Vallée de la Vallée  | 83. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 14. Vallée de la Vallée | 34. Argenteau du Tiro   | 44. Village de la Vallée | 54. Vallée de la Vallée      | 64. Vallée de la Vallée | 74. Vallée de la Vallée  | 84. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 15. Vallée de la Vallée | 35. Argenteau du Tiro   | 45. Village de la Vallée | 55. Vallée de la Vallée      | 65. Vallée de la Vallée | 75. Vallée de la Vallée  | 85. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 16. Vallée de la Vallée | 36. Argenteau du Tiro   | 46. Village de la Vallée | 56. Vallée de la Vallée      | 66. Vallée de la Vallée | 76. Vallée de la Vallée  | 86. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 17. Vallée de la Vallée | 37. Argenteau du Tiro   | 47. Village de la Vallée | 57. Vallée de la Vallée      | 67. Vallée de la Vallée | 77. Vallée de la Vallée  | 87. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 18. Vallée de la Vallée | 38. Argenteau du Tiro   | 48. Village de la Vallée | 58. Vallée de la Vallée      | 68. Vallée de la Vallée | 78. Vallée de la Vallée  | 88. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 19. Vallée de la Vallée | 39. Argenteau du Tiro   | 49. Village de la Vallée | 59. Vallée de la Vallée      | 69. Vallée de la Vallée | 79. Vallée de la Vallée  | 89. Vallée de la Vallée |
| 20. Vallée de la Vallée | 40. Argenteau du Tiro   | 50. Village de la Vallée | 60. Vallée de la Vallée      | 70. Vallée de la Vallée | 80. Vallée de la Vallée  | 90. Vallée de la Vallée |



If he returns to Plan-Praz, to rejoin his mules, he will follow a terrace path which leads in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. to the *Flégère* (5225 ft.), a plateau on the mountain side below the *Aiguilles Rouges*. Those, however, who find the whole excursion too long will do well to prefer the ascent of the *Brévent* to the circuit by the *Flégère*.

This point of view lies exactly opposite the *Glacier des Bois* and *Mer de Glace*. The *Châlet* of *Flégère* affords shelter in unfavourable weather, and here refreshment may be had, and even beds for those who would await the sunrise, or wish to explore the *Aiguilles Rouges*. The descent to *Chamonix* through a pine-forest takes 2 hrs.

f. *Source of the Arveiron*.—This affluent of the *Arve* issues from beneath a vault or cave of ice with which the *Glacier des Bois* and *Mer de Glace* terminate. The ice-cavern from which the stream issued was remarkable, but of late years it has been scarcely worth a visit, as the glacier has retreated so far. The glacier is now above the rocks. In 1854 it came down into the valley, and must at no very distant time have reached the forest. It is a pleasant walk of about an hour (3 m.), keeping the carr.-road up the valley as far as *les Praz*, where that to the source of the *Arveiron* turns off to the rt. The source (small Inn: *Au Touriste*) may also be visited on descending from the *Flégère*, or on the way to the *Chapeau*, to which there is a path up the moraine.

g. *The Chapeau* is one of the points of view over the *Glacier des Bois*, on the side furthest from *Chamonix*; from it the *Aiguilles* of *Charmoz* and *Blaitière* are well seen, with the vale of *Chamonix* and the *Brévent*. A visit to the *Chapeau* may be made either on foot or with the mules: if you go by the regular road, continue along the valley as far as *Les Tines*; beyond which is a bridle-path on the right, through the hamlet of *Lavan-cher*, to the foot of the ascent. Mules can go as far as a grass mound properly called the *Chapeau*, where is a

châlet with refreshments. This excursion is scarcely worth a separate day, and is best combined with the *Montanvers* (see b).

h. *Excursion to the Col de Balme* and *Tête Noire* and back without going to *Martigny*, in about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  hrs., combining the chief beauties of both passes. From the inn on the summit of the *Col de Balme* (Rte. 141) there is a path, practicable for mules, direct to the *Tête Noire* inn. It turns l. across pastures scored with cattle-tracks, and bears away gradually to the rt., passing a small lake, whence a rather steep descent brings the traveller in about an hour immediately above the valley of the *Tête Noire*. The path for the last  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. skirts the edge of the precipice and descends a kind of staircase to the H. de la *Tête Noire* (Rte. 141). It is perhaps better to make this excursion in the opposite direction, going first to the *Tête Noire*, and ascending to the *Col de Balme*.

i. *The Plan des Aiguilles*.—Guide 10 fr. This excursion may be combined with that to the *Montanvers* or *Pierre Pointue*; but it has its own mule-path, which begins just outside *Chamonix*, turning l. at the first cottages from the path to the *Cascade du Dard*. The object is to gain a magnificent view, and to see nearer the *Aiguilles* and the wild scenery at their bases. The *Pavillon Restaurant* has been closed. Paths lead from it to the *Montanvers* and *Pierre Pointue*. The ride up is called 3 hrs., passing in 30 min. the *Cascade de Blaitière*, and then steep through the forest to the *Plan*, 7478 ft. above the sea, between the *Glaciers* des *Pélerins* and de *Blaitière*. Further E. is the *Gl.* des *Nantillons*, and from W. to E. are the A. du *Midi*, 12,608 ft., A. du *Plan*, 12,051 ft., A. de *Blaitière*, 11,608 ft., A. de *Charmoz*, 11,293 ft. On the W. side of the *Gl.* de *Blaitière* is a small lake.

k. *The Buet*. Guide 15 fr. This peak is in itself a wild and desolate mountain, chiefly interesting from the extraordinary change which has taken place in the appearance of its upper

portion, owing to the rapid diminution of its glaciers during the past 15 yrs. Its ascent is perfectly easy for fair walkers, and is frequently made for the sake of the view of Mont Blanc. From no other point can the height and dimensions of the upper portion of the mountain be so well seen, and the view is as admirable from an artistic as from the topographical point of view. The supreme grandeur of Mont Blanc diverts attention from the panorama, which includes a large portion of the Bernese and Pennine Alps, and a fine view over the ranges of Savoy. The ascent may be shortened by sleeping at Argentière, or, better still, at the chalet *Inn* of the Pierre à Bérard. From Chamonix to Argentière is a carriage-road of 6 m. Beyond this village the car-road of the Tête Noire is followed over the Col des Montets to the chalets of *Poyaz*, where the traveller turns l. up the *Vallée de Bérard*, which is beautiful at its entrance, but savage above. In 2½ hrs. from Argentière the path reaches the *Pierre à Bérard*, 7498 ft., a small *Inn* with beds. To this point mules can go. The *Col de Salenton* (to Servoz by the Dioza valley) is left to the S.; another rock, called the *Table au Chuntre*, in memory of M. Bourrit, Precentor of the Cathedral of Geneva, a contemporary of De Saussure, and one of the earliest and most enthusiastic explorers and illustrators of this district, is passed, and the track ascends a series of ridges of rock and beds of snow (2 to 3 hrs.) from the Pierre à Bérard to the summit (10,200 ft.). You may descend to Servoz by the *Col de l'Échaud* at the head of the *Vallée de la Dioza*, or to Chamonix, by crossing the ridge of the Brévent from that valley, or to Sixt by the same col and *Vallée des Fonds* in 5 hrs. By starting from Argentière in the morning, Sixt is easily reached in the evening. (Rte. 143.)

1. The ascent of Mont Blanc is frequently made from Chamonix. Though the route is long and fatiguing, Mont Blanc is not a difficult mountain, and is consequently often

ascended by ladies and persons utterly unfitted for the exertion. It is, however, subject to terrible storms, and probably more lives have been lost on it than on all the other Alps of Switzerland and Savoy. The expense of the ascent for one person is 200 fr. (the pay of 2 guides) besides the cost of provisions. No porter ought to be required, but the Chamonix rules provide that one shall be taken. For two or more 100 fr. each (pay of 1 guide), plus a share of the expense of the extra guide and provisions. In other words, one can make the ascent for about 10*l.*; two for about 7*l.* each.

The mountain is now so well known, and the proper precautions so thoroughly understood, that little serious risk is incurred in *fine weather*, and with *really experienced and trustworthy guides*. It should be generally known, however, that those who make the attempt without a good deal of previous training may suffer severely from fatigue, and are likely to derive very little enjoyment from the expedition.

The chain of Mont Blanc runs from N.E. to S.W. between the Col de Ferrex and Col du Bonhomme, rising directly from the Italian valley, but at a considerable distance from the vale of Chamonix, to which it throws out minor spurs or ridges. Two of these spurs, radiating from the summit of Mont Blanc N.E. and W., enclose the opening through which the top is gained from Chamonix, while along the W. spur lies the route from St. Gervais.

The first mention of Mont Blanc in English literature is found in Bishop Burnet's letters (A.D. 1685). The bishop speaks of it as "the hill called Maudit or Cursed, two miles in perpendicular height, and of which one-third is always covered with snow." But it was not till the beginning of the following century that its situation was ascertained, or till towards its end that attempts were made to conquer it.

The earliest attempts to ascend this redoubtable mountain were prompted by De Saussure, and made from the *Montagne de la Côte*, between the gla-

ciers of Bossons and Taconnay, but were without success until 1786. In that year *Jacques Balmat*, who had remained behind on one of these expeditions, discovered the Grand Plateau, and soon afterwards reached the top by this course, taking with him Dr. Paccard. In 1787 Saussure made his famous ascent in 4 days, with 18 guides headed by Balmat, passing the first night on the *Montagne de la Côte*, and the two following on the snow; and in the same year Col. Beaufoy accomplished the first English ascent. In 1820, Dr. Hamel, a Russian, accompanied by two Englishmen, met with a sad accident. Fresh snow had fallen, and when passing the *Rochers Rouges* an avalanche swept four of the guides into a crevasse. One only, Marie Couttet, was rescued. The remains of the others were found in 1861 and 1863, in the latter year on the *Glacier des Bossons*,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  m. from the scene of the disaster. From this time the "ancien passage," to the rt. of the *Rochers Rouges*, was abandoned, and in 1827 Messrs. Fellows and Hawes passed to the l. of the rocks by the circuitous rte. which has been since followed. In 1855, Messrs. Hudson and E. S. Kennedy, with three companions, but without guides, were the first to ascend from St. Gervais. They reached the *Dôme du Goûter*, but from that point descended to the Grand Plateau and proceeded by the usual route. In 1859, Mr. Hudson accomplished the other half by mounting from the Plateau to the *Dôme* and passing thence along the *Bosse du Dromadaire*; and in 1861 Messrs. L. Stephen and Tuckett made the complete St. Gervais passage by the Aig. du Goûter, *Dôme*, and *Bosses*. In August 1870, a party of eleven, three travellers and eight guides and porters, were caught in a storm and perished.

*Ascent from Chamonix.*—The traveller mounts by the steep forest and pasture in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. to the *Pierre Pointue*, and in 40 min. more, to the *Pierre à l'Echelle* and bank of the *Glacier des Bossons*. The view from this point is very fine, of the wild sea of ice and

snowy heights of the Aig. and *Dôme du Goûter*. To the l. are Mt. Blanc du Tacul and Mont Maudit. From the latter a minor ridge, mostly covered by the ice, but jutting out in the dark rocks of the *Grands Mulets*, runs down towards the *Montagne de la Côte*, and separates the glaciers of Taconnay and Bossons. The passage of the glacier generally takes about 2 hrs., but the time varies with the state of the ice, which is always torn and broken, and in some seasons somewhat difficult. After crossing the most crevassed spot where the two ice-streams touch, the route lies up steep slopes which turn from ice to névé at the base of the *Grands Mulets*. Here is a large two-roomed hut, permanently inhabited in summer, where food, wine, and beds have been provided at prices too high even for the situation. In 1879 it came under new management, and will probably be better conducted. It is perched upon a ledge 10,008 ft. above the sea, and supplies everything needful for a night. There is a smaller cabin for guides. The excursion to the *Grands Mulets*, and a night spent there, give a better idea of the glories of the ice-world than can be obtained elsewhere at so moderate a cost in exertion. A fine sunset from this height is a spectacle never to be forgotten.

Those who proceed to Mont Blanc usually start an hour before daybreak, in order to profit by the hard snow.

The track mounts for about 3 to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. by the easy slopes of the *Petit Plateau*, and a steep crevassed incline to the *Grand Plateau* (12,836 ft.), which lies between the *Dôme du Goûter* and Mont Maudit. In another hour, bearing to the l. it passes rt. the *Rochers Rouges*, and W. of them the "ancien passage" where Dr. Hamel's guides were lost. It then enters the *Corridor*, a valley of snow leading up to the lowest point on the crest of the chain between Mt. Blanc and Mt. Maudit. Here the Italian mountains and Monte Rosa first burst on the view. Now begins the climb up the *Mur de la Côte*, a slow and chilling stage, as steps have often to be cut. But

above the slope grows less, the rocks called *Petits Mulets* break through the surface, and after a long easy slope has been surmounted the summit is won. It is a narrow ridge, some 200 yards long, 15,781 ft. above the sea. During the latter part of the ascent, the rarity of the air affects, in many cases, the frames of climbers, so as to cause them to find unusual difficulty in walking, and to suffer from headache and nausea. These effects, however, are rarely experienced by guides or practised mountaineers, and experience has abundantly proved in various portions of the globe, that at heights up to 20,000 ft., mountain-sickness, like sea-sickness, is an affection which, in the majority of cases, yields to habit and training. (See *Introd.*)

An alternative route from the Grand Plateau, often followed, is by way of the *Boscs du Dromadaire*. It is more exposed to wind, but is perhaps otherwise preferable to the ordinary route.

The view, as might be expected, is remarkable for extent and sublimity, rather than for any striking individual feature. The eye sweeps over all the snowy cantonnments of the Alps, from Dauphiné to the Bernina. The Italian plain, so well seen from Monte Rosa, is hidden for the most part by intervening ranges, but the line of the Apennines is distinctly visible, and on the other side, beyond the Jura, which is itself like a mountain on a model, the plains of France stretch away to the hills of the Côte d'Or. The sky overhead is of the darkest blue, the horizon a rich amber tint, morning clouds gather a mile below the feet, sailing over the green slopes of Savoy or hanging in the forests of Val d'Aosta. Of course there are many days when the climber finds no such glorious reward for his pains. Gathering mists or an icy blast compel him to turn back again after a hasty glance to convince himself that he has reached the highest ridge. Some mountaineers, however, have by prudent skill managed like Prof. Tyndall

to spend 20 hrs. on the top, or to remain to witness the sunset, like M. Loppé and Mr. L. Stephen. The effect of the gigantic shadow flung eastwards by Mont Blanc as the sun sinks is described as most wonderful. The time taken in the descent of Mont Blanc varies from 4 to 8 hrs., according to the state of the snow and the condition of the climbers.

*Ascent from St. Gervais.*—From the nearest starting-point, the *Bellevue Inn* on the Col de Voza (2 hrs. from St. Gervais), a track passes high along the flank of *Mt. Lacha* to the névé of the *Glacier de Bionnassay*. The ice is mounted for a short time, and then the slopes l. to the foot of the rocks of the *Aiguille du Goûter* (12,707 ft.). These are very steep buttresses, separated by snow couloirs, and as no one rib can be climbed to the top, a traveller has to pass from one to the other across a couloir. This is the chief difficulty and danger of the ascent. If all goes well the *Cabane*, about 150 ft. below the summit of the *aiguille*, is reached in 2½ hrs. from the base of the rocks. From this point the distance along the ridge of the *Dôme du Goûter* and *Bosse* to the top of Mont Blanc may be walked in 4 or 5 hrs. In 1864 Mr. Moore accomplished the whole ascent in one day—from the Bellevue to Chamonix.

The circuitous routes from the Col de Miage side have no longer any practical importance.

For the ascents of Mont Blanc, from the Italian side, see Rte. 134.

The excitement of passing a night on the mountain is part of the interest of an ascent of Mt. Blanc. This may, however, be enjoyed by going to the *Grands Mulets*, an excursion in which there is no danger, and by sleeping there; choosing a moonlight night and fine weather to enjoy the extensive view, the bright sky, and the thunder of falling avalanches.

All the conspicuous *Aiguilles*, with 2 exceptions, the *Dent du Géant* and the *Aiguille de Charmoz*, have yielded to the perseverance of members of the Alpine Club. The *Aiguille Verte* is an ascent only fit for practised climbers, with

good guides. It varies greatly in difficulty according to the state of the rocks and the "Bergschrund," and in some years is practically impossible. The *A. du Midi* from the side of the Gl. du Géant is a stiff but not very long climb. The *A. de Trelatête* commands a noble view, and from the N. is comparatively easy. The rock obelisk of the *Dru* was climbed in 1878, by the S. rocks, by Messrs. C. T. Dent and Hartley, after repeated unsuccessful attempts. It is an ascent of the greatest difficulty.

Chamonix to Sixt by the *Col du Brévent* and *Col d'Anterne* (20 m.) is a ride or walk of 10 hrs. (not including halts) by an excellent mule-path; a walk of 9 or 10 hrs.

There are other mountain rtes. to Sixt from the valley of the Arve, from Servoz, St. Martin, and Magland (all described in Rte. 143).

For a high-level rte. to Zermatt from Chamonix in 4 or 5 days there is a choice of passes. 1st day, Col du Tour or Col d'Argentière to Orsières and St. Pierre. 2nd, Col de la Maison Blanche to Mauvoisin, or Col du Sonadon to Lancet. 3rd, Col de Breney, or Col de Chemontane to Arolla. 4th, Col de Bertol and d'Héréns in succession, or the Col du Mt. Brulé and de Valpelline.

See preceding Routes.

## ROUTE 139.

CHAMONIX TO COURMAYEUR, BY THE COL DU BONHOMME AND THE COL DE LA SEIGNE.

| Chamonix.                  | Hours. |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Les Houches (road) 44 m.   |        |
| Col de Voza . . . . .      | 1½     |
| Contamines . . . . .       | 3      |
| Nant Borant . . . . .      | 2      |
| Col du Bonhomme . . . . .  | 3½     |
| Chapieux . . . . .         | 1½     |
| Motets . . . . .           | 2      |
| Col de la Seigne . . . . . | 1½     |
| Courmayeur . . . . .       | 4      |

Mule-path. A journey of 3 short days: 1st day to Contamines; 2nd day to Chapieux; 3rd day to Courmayeur; or 2 long days, sleeping at

Nant Borant. Fair walkers may cross the Col des Fours, instead of making the détour by Chapieux, but will do still better to venture on the Col du Mont Tendu (Rte. 142).

The *Tour of Mont Blanc* may thus be made in 7 days. 1, 2, and 3, to Courmayeur; 4, to Aosta (Rte. 134); 5, to the Great St. Bernard (Rte. 135); 6, to Martigny (Rte. 135); 7, to Chamonix. Or in 4 long days: 1 and 2, to Courmayeur; 3, to Orsières or Martigny, by the Col Ferrex (Rte. 137); 4, to Chamonix (Rte. 141).

A guide should be taken in doubtful weather over the Bonhomme and Seigne. These passes are high, and much exposed to bitter winds and snow, and the path may be easily lost. The views of the Mont Blanc range from the Col de Voza and in the descent to Courmayeur are superb, but between the Col de la Seigne and Contamines the scenery is dull.

From Chamonix the road to Servoz is followed as far as

4½ m. Les Houches, 1½ hr., from which steep paths ascend the mountain to the

*Col de Voza*. The first path to the l. goes to the Pavillon de Bellevue, 5944 ft.; another, ¼ m. farther on, to the Pavillon du Col de Voza, 5495 ft. [From the second path a third branches rt. to St. Gervais by the *Col de la Forclaz*, 5104 ft.] The first is the bridle-path generally followed, and the Bellevue is the best inn, but the charges are high. The view from the col of the vale of Chamonix, the long slopes of Mont Blanc and Aiguilles Rouges, is exceedingly fine, and may be seen to still greater advantage from the height to the N.W., called the *Prairion*, 6458 ft. To the W. is Mont Joli. On the descent the grand *Glacier de Bionnassay*, sweeping down from the W. flank of Mont Blanc, between savage rocks, is a magnificent object. Those who are on mules, or going to St. Gervais, pass through the village of *Bionnassay*, and down a ravine in forest to the Val de Montjoie at *Bionnay*, 1½ hr. from the col, 2 m. from St. Gervais, 3½ m. from Contamines. There is

another rte. to St. Gervais over the Prairion. The shorter path to Contamines crosses the stream near the glacier, runs along the mountain-side through Champel, and then l. over the shoulder, descending to the carriage-road at the chalets of *La Villlette*,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. from Bionnay, 2 m. from Contamines. On the way down, there is a commanding view of Val Montjoie, extending upwards to the Bonhomme, while opposite is seen the pretty village of St. Nicolas de Véroce, at the base of Mont Joli.

*Contamines* 3855 ft. (*Inns*: H. de l'Union; H. du Bonhomme; both fair. The accommodation here is the best on the road), a scattered village with a handsome church, prettily situated on a commanding height.

*Mont Joli* (8291 ft.), can be ascended in 3 to 4 hrs. by an easy track. Mules can go nearly to the top. Commands a noble view of the W. side of Mont Blanc, corresponding as a belvedere to the Cramont on the S. and the Brevent on the N. S.W. is seen the valley of Nant Rouge, leading by the *Col Joli* and valley of Haute Luce in 8 hrs. to Beaufort. The traveller going on to Nant Borant to sleep, should inquire what number of travellers are gone ahead.

[An interesting excursion may be made to the *Glaçier de Trélatête* (close to it is a small *Inn*), descending from it to Nant Borant; or the *Col du Mont Tonlu* (Rte. 142) may be passed to the Col de la Seigne. From the inn the *Aiguille de Béranger* may be ascended in 4 hrs.]

From Contamines the carriage-road runs along the E. side of the Bon Nant (there is a footpath on the other side) as far as a bridge opposite the chapel of *Notre Dame de la Gorge*, situated at the end of a ravine, is a romantic spot, shut in by rocks. Here the ascent to the Bonhomme properly begins. A very steep and rudely-paved path leads directly out of the ravine, step-wise, through a forest, and where it gains the open alp passes in a deep chasm the fall of the Bont Nant. Just above it stands the *Inn*—

*Au Nant Borant* 4780 ft. (good, a comfortable dépendance). Its position on the verge of a steep descent, with view down the valley, is very charming; the scenery wild and grand, and heightened in effect by the roar of the Bont Nant. A finer waterfall may be found on the torrent which descends from the glacier of Trélatête. It may be reached in  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr., and it will not be necessary to return to the inn in ascending the Bonhomme.

Above Nant Borant the path, after completing the ascent from the chapel, runs nearly on a level through a rich upland vale between clumps of fir. A rough track mounts to the humble inn of the *Châlet à la Burne*, where the traveller has reached the limit of trees. To the W. rises a fantastic ridge, which gives name to the pass, one of its pinnacles being called *Le Bonhomme*, another (l. of it), *La Femme du Bonhomme*. [A track mounts l. to the *Col de la Fenêtre*, leading to Beaufort by the valley of the Haute Luce (Rte. 150) and further 3 m., another col, approached by a long slope of débris, leads to the same place by the beautiful Val de la Gîte, falling in with that from the Col de la Sauce.] A rocky defile leads to the *Plan Jovet*,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from Nant Borant, a grassy basin on which are found the *Châlet du Mont Bovet* and a little lake, the *Lac Noir*. Here beds may be had. Upwards the valley is closed by the Bonhomme; and, on looking back, the whole length of the Val Montjoie is seen bounded by the peaks of the Varens above St. Martin. [To the E. is a short cut to Motet by the *Col d'Enclaves*, just E. of the Tête d'Enclaves, a rough ascent from the Lac Noir of about 1 hr., descent of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr.] The path of the Bonhomme leads up a steep acclivity for 20 min., to the *Plan des Dunes*, 6523 ft. above the sea, where a cairn, or heap of stones, has existed from time immemorial. Tradition says, that a great lady with her suite perished here in a storm, and gave name to the fatal spot.

Another wild ascent of 40 min.

leads up herbless slopes to what, from below, seems to be the col, but it is the *Col de la Sance*, between *Le Bonhomme* and the *Aig. de Rousselotte*, leading W. to Beaufort. Bearing l. from this point, another hr. across a pathless waste brings the traveller to the cross on the

*Col du Bonhomme*, 8135 ft., where the view opens S. towards the valley of the Isère and Mont Pourri (12,421 ft.), one of the most beautiful peaks in the Alps, supported by the A. de la Gassière. The higher slopes of the Bonhomme may at times be dangerous. They are occasionally swept by the most violent winds, which stir up those fearful snow-eddies called "tourmentes." A guide should be taken if there is the least prospect of bad weather, but even a guide may here lose the way. This happened on the 13th of September, 1830, when two English gentlemen, with guides, perished from cold and exhaustion whilst crossing the pass.

The path from the Bonhomme leads to the Tarentaise by the Val Bellaval, first descending 3000 ft. to Chapieux. [To Motet and the Col de la Seigne, the shorter course by an hour is the *Col des Fours* (8891 ft.), and this is frequently taken by those who wish to reach Courmayeur in one day from Nant Borant. The track to it mounts l. from the Croix du Bonhomme, and descends to a bridge a little below Motet. Descent steep and rough.]

To Chapieux the descent is on grass, and easy.

*Chapieux*, 4951 ft. (*Inns*: H. du Soleil, best and clean, but very homely; H. des Voyageurs, a wretched den). This is a group of gaunt stone huts, one of which is the douane, surrounded by wild and bare slate mountains. The valley S., leads in 3 hrs. to Bourg St. Maurice, the latter part of the way by an excellent carriage-road. The path up the stream leads in 1½ hr. to some huts and a little chapel, where the stream is crossed, and in ½ an hour more to

The *Chalets* of Motet (6227 ft.), one

house forming 2 *Inns*, of which the upper (chez Medan) is the best. It is clean, but very rough.

The paths from the Cols du Bonhomme, des Fours, d'Enclaves, and Mont Tondou, all meet here. Above the blue ice of the Glacier du Glacier is the Aig. du Glacier; to the l. the small Glacier des Lancettes and Mont Tondou.

The ascent to the *Col de la Seigne* lies over grass. The summit, 1½ hr. from Motet, is 8307 ft. above the sea, on a ridge which runs down from the Aig. du Glacier, and separates the waters which feed the Rhone from those which are tributaries of the Po. It commands the vista of the Allée Blanche and Val Ferrex for 18 m., and the S. side of Mont Blanc, which, rising 11,000 ft. above the Allée Blanche, without being absolutely a precipice, is in great part too steep to allow snow to rest on it.

This view has been compared with that of the Vale of Chamonix from the Col de Voza. It is far more stern and savage. The valley is in great part ruined by glaciers and avalanches. Mt. Blanc itself is more imposing but less beautiful, but the enormous buttress-like masses of its southern aiguilles surpass in grandeur the rock-scenery on its Savoyard flanks. The chief features of the range in the Allée Blanche are,—directly to the l. the Aig. du Glacier and Aig. de Trélatôte, from which streams the Gl. de l'Allée Blanche; the great Gl. de Miage; the summit of Mont Blanc, supported by the buttresses of Mont Broglin and A. de Peuteret, the last of the boldest form; and, beyond it, the Aig. du Géant and Grandes Jorasses.

The *Allée Blanche* (properly 'La lex Blanche': lex or lei, according to M. Durier, signifies an enclosed pasture, hence in the mountains a pasture hemmed in by precipices; cf. Pigne de la Lée near Zinal, Alcfroide (la lex froide) in Dauphiné, and perhaps Allalein above Saas), consists of 3 distinct basins. The traveller descends from the col, over slopes of grass, to the highest, which presents in its surroundings one of the wildest

and most solitary scenes imaginable. To the l. are the *Pyramides Calcaires*, to the rt. bare and savage highlands. An extensive plain marks the site of a lake once formed here by the moraine of the Gl de l'Allée Blanche, through which the river tumbles in a foaming rapid. At the head of this descent the stream is crossed to the rt. bank, and the path goes steeply down, with a fine view of Mt. Blanc and the Gl de Miage, to the second basin. This is occupied at its lower end by the *Lac de Combai*, and walled in by the moraine of the Gl de Miage, one of the most remarkable in the Alps. The track skirts the S. shore of the lake to a very ancient dam and sluice at the outlet, from which a path ascends rt. to Courmayeur by the Col de Chécruit. The valley path crosses the dam, and then runs for nearly 2 m. down the side of the moraine, which is covered by fir-trees, and forms with the mountain-side a ravine through which the river rushes. The rest of the valley is filled by the rubbish left by the glacier, which is, however, not seen. The moraine ends on a beautiful green alp, with a small Inn—the *Cantine de la Vanzal*—from which there is a grand view of A. de Peuteret (12,392 ft.), the Dru of the S. side. Below this point the valley is called *Val Vénit*, and is bordered by rich meadows on the rt. The third basin is a waste of stones thinly sprinkled with firs, and scored by numberless streams. Above it rise the precipices of the Mont Broglia. At its lower end the mountains close (rt. another path to the Col de Chécruit), and the traveller enters the forest of St. Nicolas, covering the base of Mt. Chétif, from which are seen some of the finest views in the descent. The empty bed and huge moraines of the Gl de Brenva fill the depths of the valley, and above them tower the A. de Peuteret and other buttresses of Mt. Blanc. Before the foreground was spoilt by the retreat of the glacier, this was one of the most impressive scenes in the Alps. On a little terrace stands the chapel of A. D. de la *tinée*

*raison*, whence the view is seen to perfection. The path now descends towards the opening between the Chétif and Mont Saxe, through which the waters of Mt. Blanc roll into the Val d'Aosta, and crossing them to the Baths of La Saxe, in 20 min. more, or 4½ hrs. from the Col de la Seigne, reaches

Courmayeur. (Rte. 134.)

## ROUTE 141.

CHAMONIX TO MARTIGNY OR VERNAYAZ, (A) BY THE TÊTE NOIRE, (B) BY THE COL DE BALME.

There are two routes from Chamonix to Martigny, dividing at Argentière and meeting again at the foot of the Forclaz in the Trient valley. The Tête Noire road is practicable for charrs, that over the Col de Balme is a mule-path. From Argentière to Martigny is about 7 hrs. by the first, and 8 hrs. by the latter route. Travellers are often perplexed which to choose of these two passes. The general scenery of the Tête Noire is superior; but the Col de Balme has *one view* which surpasses any on the Tête Noire. There is again a choice of roads from the Tête Noire to the Rhone valley. The Forclaz may well be preferred by travellers leaving Chamonix, the Vernayaz route by those approaching it. The journey may be broken at the H. Royal du Châtelard, or at the Tête Noire inn.

Pedestrians may solve the problem by proceeding from Chamonix to the Tête Noire; thence they may strike off right through meadows and across pasture to the inn on the Col de Balme, adding thereby 2 to 3 hrs. to their walk.

A broad carriage-road lies up the vale of Chamonix, by *Les Praz*. It then mounts a wooded defile past the hamlet of *Tines* to that of *Les Isles*, and, crossing the Arve, reaches by a gentle ascent the village of

Argentière (3963 ft.) (Inns: Courronne; Bellevue; both fair). Here

the diminished glacier of Argentière is seen streaming down from the Aiguille d'Argentière and Le Tour Noir, and there is also a fine view of Mont Blanc. Beyond Argentière the path to the Col de Balme turns off rt. The road of the Tête Noire rises rapidly, with fine views of the Aiguille Verte to the miserable hamlet of *Trélechant*, and in  $\frac{3}{4}$  hr. from Argentière attains the

*Col des Montets* (4741 ft.), the lowest point in the ridge connecting the chain of Mt. Blanc with the Aiguilles Rouges, and dividing the waters of the Rhone and the Arve. At the Col de Balme the same ridge is crossed at a point nearly 2500 ft. higher.

A little beyond the crest, near Poyaz, the savage valley of Bérard opens to the left. The Eau Noire descends from it into the head of the Valorsine, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.'s walk up the stream forms the beautiful *Cascade de Bérard*, tumbling in the pine-forest down a bed of granite rocks. On looking up this valley, the snows of the lofty *Buet* lying behind the Aiguilles Rouges are seen. [The ascent of the *Buet* may be made by following the Eau Noire upwards to the Chalet Bérard, where a traveller can pass the night (Rte. 138, l.). The valley of Bérard leads also to the *Col de Salenton*, for Servoz, through the valley of the Dioza.]

A short descent from the Col des Montets leads to

*Valorsine*, the chief village of the valley, much exposed to avalanches of snow. Its church having been more than once swept away, a strong rampart of masonry and earth has been raised to defend it from similar catastrophes. The path now descends more rapidly, enters the forest at the base of the mountain *Les Poussettes*, and soon reaches the little Inn of

*H. de la Cascade Barberine*, fair, half-way to Martigny, where travellers may visit the *Fall of the Barberine*,  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. to the l., loftier but not so beautifully situated as the *Cascade de Bérard*. The stream descends between the mountains *La Péron* (S.) and *Bel Oiseau* (N.), and its glen runs up to *Mt. Ruan*

and the *Tour Sallière*. [By Val Barberine Sixt may be reached over the *Col de Grenairon*, or the difficult *Col de Tenneverges*, a little farther N.; and Champéry by the *Col de la Tour Sallière*, a glacier pass at the head of the valley between the Tour Sallière, S., and Mt. Ruan.]  $\frac{1}{4}$  hr. beyond the H. Barberine is a larger and very good house, the

*H. Royal du Châtelard*, close to an old barrier gate and redoubt, marking the frontier of Savoy and Switzerland. This is a beautiful part of the road. The valley is contracted to a defile, which is richly clothed with forest, and overhung by the savage rocks of the *Péron* and *Bel Oiseau*. There are turfy green knolls and a clear rushing torrent, and S.W. the peaks of the Aiguilles Rouges. Here the path by the Eau Noire to Vernayaz strikes off to the l. (see below). The char-road goes through the old archway and winds upwards, with a charming view, to a short tunnel, in a situation of singular grandeur. 10 min. beyond the tunnel (*Roche Percée*) is the

*Hôtel de la Tête Noire*, 3917 ft., recently rebuilt, one of the usual halting places between Chamonix and Martigny (about 4 hrs. from Chamonix). On the hill-side, just above the inn, is the path already mentioned leading to the Col de Balme, and which any one staying here should ascend a short distance. On the other side is a path which crosses the deep valley and joins the bridle-rte. to Vernayaz.

At this point the road quits the valley of the Eau Noire to ascend its tributary the Trient, which forces its way at a great depth below the road. The traveller turns abruptly into the dark forest of Trient, passing round the shoulder of a mountain covered with forests: this shoulder is called the Tête Noire, and forms part of the *Croix de Fer*, the highest point between the rtes. of the Col de Balme and Tête Noire. He ascends through the dense forest for 20 min. and then emerging into the open valley crosses the stream to

*Trient* (4240 ft.), a hamlet with a poor Inn, seated on rich meadows be-

tween forests and precipices, in view of the Glacier du Trient which closes the valley. A steep ascent leads in 30 min. to the second pass—

The *Col de la Forclaz*, 4997 ft. (a small *Inn*).

[The traveller who is going to the Great St. Bernard may from this point agreeably vary the hackneyed route by Martigny and Sembranchier, by crossing the mountain on the rt. to the Lake of Champey. It is a rough bridle-path of 4 hrs. to Orsières. Ladies should sleep the previous night at the H. Royal or Tête Noire. From the Forclaz the path diverges and gradually ascends, and between the chalets of *La Gîte* and *Bovine* affords a more extensive and magnificent view than that from the Forclaz. Milk in abundance can be got at Bovine. A little further, the path descends by sharp zigzags to a torrent which it crosses by a plank-bridge. Thence it runs parallel to, but above, the torrent, and descends to the valley and village of Champey.

The *Mont Catogne*, which rises over the St. Bernard road, is connected with the Mont Blanc chain, by a low ridge, to which the valley of Champey runs up. On its summit lies the secluded little *Lake of Champey*, set in a fringe of firs, with the splendid Combin towering in the distance behind it. Here a small *Inn* has been opened. From the lake a rapid descent of  $\frac{3}{4}$  hr. leads to Orsières. There is another path to the Col de Champey from Bovernier on the St. Bernard road.]

From the Forclaz the view is limited, but  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. lower down, the long course of the Rhone through the Valais, a prospect celebrated in the Alps, is displayed in perfection. The new road commands finer views than the rough old path, and is preferable even for pedestrians. The descent is at first through woods, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. are required to reach the Dranse at Martigny-le-Bourg (Rte. 135). It is 1 m. of flat road to

*Martigny-la-Ville* (Rte. 56)—*Inns*:

Clerc, first-rate; de la Tour; Grande Maison; Poste; Monte Blanc; all good.

It takes 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. to ascend from Martigny to the Forclaz,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. to descend.

[*Tête Noire*, by *Finhaut*, to *Vernayaz*.—The pass of the Tête Noire to Martigny may be advantageously varied by following the stream of the Eau Noire downwards into the valley of the Rhone, through a very beautiful valley, avoiding Martigny and shortening the distance to the Lake of Geneva. From Châtelard to Vernayaz is about 4 hrs.

At the *Hotel du Châtelard* the paths separate: that to the l., leading to Vernayaz, begins at once to ascend, and very soon the church and village of Finhaut are seen. The path is well laid out, and is almost wide enough for a char, and cannot be missed. A steep ascent by zigzags takes you, in 45 min., to the highest point of the pass, about 4300 ft. Thence a descent, and then an ascent brings you, in 45 min., to *Finhaut*, where refreshments can be obtained. Then an ascent of about 10 min., from the summit of which is a fine view into the ravines below and up to the mountains above. From the l. side of the Val de Trient, the upper part of the valley appears like a narrow black trench, with a distant view of Mont Blanc filling up the depression of the Col des Montets, through which the road of the Tête Noire passes. Examples of "glacier markings," interesting to the geologist, may be observed on the rocks. After a steep descent of 45 min. through fine pine-woods, the little village of *Trinquent* and the bridge over the *Triège* are reached. The bridge is at a great height above the stream, which comes tumbling down the rocks above and below. About  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. of tolerable level road brings you to *Salvan* [pass by *Col de Sesanfe* to Champéry]. Beyond *Salvan* the road leaves the inaccessible gorge through which the Trient pours into the Rhone to the rt., and with fine views of the Rhone valley descends by 52 zigzags

down a wooded cliff upon the village of

*Vermayaz* (*Inn*: H. des Gorges du Trient, good), a little above the Salenche waterfall, 2 m. from Martigny (Rte. 56).

*Vermayaz Railway Stat.* Rte. 56.]

(D) THE COL DE BALME.

From Argentière a steady, shadeless, and somewhat monotonous ascent leads past La Tour, the highest village in the valley, to the crest which forms the extreme E. boundary of the valley of Chamonix, and is known as the *Col de Balme*, 7231 ft. (*Inn*: tolerable, but rather dear), commanding a noble view. Mont Blanc, from his summit to his base in the vale of Chamonix, rises before the traveller, towering high above the A. du Midi and its fellows. Nearer at hand are the Aiguilles Verte and du Dru. Below, the eye sweeps through the vale of Chamonix, to the Col de Voza at its other extremity, 15 m. distant. On the rt., are the Aiguilles Rouges and Brévent, and more to the right the snowy summit of the Buet. On the other side, the range of the Bernese Alps forms a feature in the panorama. It is a noble view, but its impressiveness has been somewhat exaggerated. To see it to the greatest advantage travellers should gain an eminence  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. N. under the *Croix de Fer*, the highest point of the mountain mass between the Col de Balme and Tête Noire. There are paths from the Col direct to the Tête Noire inn, and the H. Royal du Châtelard, near the Barberine waterfall.

The descent into the Trient valley is by a steep but good path, commanding views of the *Glacier du Trient*. The car-road of the Forclaz is joined at the corner of the first zigzag.

The road seen on the rt., leading to the foot of the glacier, was made for the purpose of carrying the ice to the railroad for exportation.

ROUTE 142.

THE GLACIER PASSES OF THE MONT BLANC CHAIN.

The glacier group, of which Mont Blanc is the principal summit, is cut off by gaps which fall far below the snow level from the rest of the Alpine chain. Its limits may be clearly traced on the accompanying map (p. 418), from which it will also be evident that between the Forclaz and the Col du Fours no route can be found across the chain which does not involve the passage of a glacier. Several, however, of the passes, described below, are perfectly safe for moderate pedestrians with good guides, and will be found less fatiguing than many mule-paths, while the scenery they offer is necessarily of great interest. They are at present tariffed at from 30 to 60 francs per guide. This includes return; 10 fr. is taken off when the traveller retains the guide for further excursions.

The *Col du Mont Tondü* (9204 ft.) is a convenient short-cut on the route to Chamonix by the Cols de la Seigne and Bonhomme, avoiding the dull part of that journey. A competent guide is, of course, required, but the glacier presents little difficulty to fair walkers. It is 10 hrs. from Courmayeur, or 5½ hrs. from the Col de la Seigne to the Pavillon de Trélatête. From the Col de la Seigne the pass is seen to the rt. under *Mont Tondü*, but to turn the walls which fence in the alp it is first necessary to mount awhile N.E. towards the *Aig. du Glacier* (12,579 ft.). The track then bears l. along the mountain side to the small *Glacier de Lancettes*, which is ascended to the final rocks. These are steep but otherwise easy. In the view from the Col, Mt. Pourri and other Graian peaks rise grandly, and Mt. Blanc is seen between the Aiguilles de Miage and Trélatête. The rocky point N.E. is worth climbing. The descent is by a small glacier to the great stream of the *Glacier de*

*Trélatête*, which is traversed as far as the ice-fall, when the moraine and rocks on the rt. or l. bank are followed to the *Pavillon de Trélatête*, 1 hr. from Contamines. Owing to the diminution in the glaciers and the consequent extent of rough ground to be traversed it is said now to be preferable to descend to Motet rather than to attempt to traverse directly from the Col du Mont Tondou to the Col de la Seigne.

The *Col de Trélatête*, W. of the Aiguille of that name. This route generally offers great glacier difficulties, and cannot be recommended. The ridges surrounding the Trélatête Gl. have been crossed at other points by mountaineers.

*Col de Miage* (11,076 ft.). 16 hrs. from Chamonix to Courmayeur. Travellers usually sleep in the chalets on the N. side of the pass, 4 hrs. from Chamonix. This route leads over the high gap in the Mont Blanc chain, conspicuous from Sallanches. Mont Blanc is here united to the Trélatête massif by a very narrow and steep-sided ridge or dyke 1500 ft. in height. Its passage, formidable in appearance, presents no serious difficulties to trained climbers; but good guides are required. The ascent is by the N. Miage Gl. and a rib of rocks. The descent on the S. side lies first down steep snow and rocks, and then along the great Miage Glacier. The views are not so fine as might be expected from the proximity of Mont Blanc—nor can the ice-scenery compare to that of the Col du Géant.

[The routes forced by mountaineers over the highest ridges of Mt. Blanc, between the Col de Miage and the Col du Géant, are not here treated as passes.]

The *Col du Géant* (11,030 ft.) (50 fr.) is said to have been used in early times by smugglers and hunters.

It was traversed in 1786 by an Englishman named Hill, and shortly afterwards by Messrs. Exchaquet and Bourrit (see 'Alp. J.,' vol. ix. p. 87).

De Saussure's ten days' residence on the summit shortly afterwards made it famous.

The *Col du Géant* is a magnificent pass through the heart of the Mont Blanc chain, its leading feature and difficulty being the ice-fall of the Gl. du Géant. It is called 14 or 15 hrs., but may be shortened 1½ hr. by sleeping at the Montanvers, and on the Italian side 2½ hrs. by starting from the Mont Fréty inn. The hut on the summit also affords night quarters. As far as the Gl. du Géant the rte. is that to the Jardin. Here, bearing rt., the traveller passes under the rocks of the Tacul near the E. bank of the glacier, in view of the wild passage he must make higher up. The broad glacier descends as a blue broken wall, with glittering points where the sun strikes its edges and spires. It rolls down under the heights of the Mont Blanc du Tacul, the Aig. du Midi and Aig. du Géant, and between the ice-girt *Le Rognon* on the W., *Aiguille Noire* on the E. It is now usually ascended on the W. side. The passage may occupy some hours, but usually 4 or 5 hrs. carry the traveller from the Tacul up the ice-fall, and over the névé, past the solitary rock of *La Vierge* to the col, 11,030 ft. Here a wooden hut has been erected, in which it is possible to sleep. Mons. Loppé and his daughter spent a week here in 1877. Hence the view to the S. is most glorious. Far spreads the sea of Alps, of which the great near waves are on one hand the Graian peaks—the Mt. Pourri, Grivola, Grand Paradis; on the other the Pennines—the Grand Combin and Monte Rosa. Deep below lies Val d'Aosta, with its fields, forests, and villages. Close at hand rise the Aiguilles Marbrées and the obelisk of the *Géant*, 13,156 ft. The descent is necessarily steep, but the rocks are good and not in the least dangerous. To the rt. is the snow-slope on which occurred the fatal slip of 1860, when three travellers and Frédéric Tairraz were lost. The party had left the safe rocks in order to slide down the snow, but the proxi-

mate cause of the accident was that the rope was not tied to the guides but merely held by them. On the track usually followed the rope is needless. The steepest part of the descent is towards the base of the buttress. Then comes the alp, and its grass slope to the Pavillon du Mt. Fréty (7103 ft.), 1½ hr. from Courmayeur.

There are several alternative passes for mountaineers from the head of the Mer de Glace. The finest of these is the *Col de la Tour Ronde*, crossing the crest either E. or W. of that prominent peak, and descending by the Brenva Glacier. This is a long but not very difficult route. The others lie E. of the Col du Géant.

The *Col des Hirondelles*, visible from the Montanvers, passes under the Grandes Jorasses with descent by the Gl. de Freboutzie, and is difficult.

The *Col de Tuléfre* (11,430 ft.), said to be easier but less interesting than the Col du Géant, is in the ridge behind the Jardin. The Aig. de Talèfre rises at the end of the rocks which separate the glaciers of Talèfre and Léchaud, and this col lies between it and the Aig. de Triolet. The ascent is by a couloir, the descent at first by steep rocks, then by snow-slopes, l. bank of the W. branch of the Gl. de Triolet, crossing to rt. bank between the ice-falls. The more difficult *Col de Triolet* (12,162 ft.) lies just under the Aig. de Triolet, 4 hrs. from the Couvercle. The descent is by a curtain of ice and rocks to the E. branch of the Gl. de Triolet (5 hrs. to the valley).

The *Gl. d'Argentière* is nearly 7 m. in length, bounded W. by the chain of Les Droites and Les Courtes, between the Aig. Verte and Aig. de Triolet; E. by Le Chardonnet, Aig. d'Argentière (12,799 ft.), Le Tour Noir and Mont Dolent. It is twice as long as the Gl. du Tour, and far overlaps the Gl. de Saléna. The starting-point for its passes is the upper *Châlet des Ugnons*, on the W. bank, to which there are tracks from Chamonix and Argentière.

The *Col de Chardonnet*, between the

Aig. de Chardonnet and the Aig. d'Argentière, is not difficult. The way up is by a broken lateral glacier; the way down to the Saléna along the base of steep rocks for 600 ft. The Gl. d'Orny can then be gained by the Fenêtre de Saléna.

At the head of the glacier are two more cols, which lead down to opposite sides of the Col Ferrex. The *Col d'Argentière*, 11,549 ft. at the S.E. corner, under Le Tour Noir, with descent by the Gl. de la Neuva to La Folie on the Swiss side. This pass is now often used as the first in the so-called "high-level route" from Chamonix to Zermatt. On the N. side it is easy; but the descent to the Gl. de Laneuvaz requires experience and caution. It is an exceedingly fine pass, and the views of the A. Verte during the ascent are of the grandest character.

The *Col du Mont Dolent*, at the S.W. angle, above the Gl. du Mont Dolent which leads down to the Italian Val Ferret, is a very difficult expedition, which has only been effected two or three times.

The *Col du Tour* to Orsières, by the Glaciers du Tour and d'Orny, is suited to ordinary pedestrians with guides, but not so the grander descent by the Gl. de Saléna. The pass is made from Argentière, or better from the Col de Balme, as the Gl. du Tour, which is much crevassed, is then reached by the E. bank at a higher point. It is called 10 hrs.' walking by the Gl. d'Orny, 13 or 14 by the Gl. de Saléna. Prof. Forbes made this pass in 1850, Mr. Wills in 1857 (see 'Peaks and Passes'). The *Col* (5 hrs.), 11,213 ft., lies just S. of the Aig. du Tour, and the descent is to the Gl. d'Orny, which is at a much higher level than the Gl. de Saléna. The *Fenêtre de Saléna* (11,200 ft.), a narrow gap to the rt., gives access to the latter, and it is well worth while to gain the view from this gap of the magnificent crags at the head, and of the brilliant *Aiguilles Dorées* to the S. of the Saléna. From a small chapel at the foot of the Gl. d'Orny a wild hollow leads to a point below Ville

d'Issert, 2 m. from Orsières. By the other rte. a steep slope of névé takes the traveller to the Gl. de Saléna, which is a grand stream of ice, broken by a fall of some 1500 ft. The descent is difficult by the rt. bank, then across to the l., from which the final drop to Praz le Fort is long and fatiguing. Mr. Wills was benighted on this pass, and gives a glowing picture of the effects of sunset upon the Aigs. Dorées, which at all times are of a golden colour. An excellent hut has been built near the Gl. d'Orny, which aids mountaineers in the exploration of this end of the Mt. Blanc chain.

The following is a fine *glacier excursion*:—Ascend Gl. du Tour. Pass through Fenêtre de Saléna. Cross Col de Chardonnet to Gl. d'Argentière. Return to Chamonix.

### ROUTE 143.

#### (A) GENEVA TO SIXT. (B) CHAMONIX TO SIXT.

| Chamonix.                    | Miles.          | Hrs.            |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Plan-Praz . . . .            | 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ |                 |
| Col du Brévent . . . .       | $\frac{1}{2}$   | 3               |
| Col d'Anterne . . . .        | 6               | 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Bas du Col d'Anterne . . . . | 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ |                 |
| Sixt . . . . .               | 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 4               |
| Samoëns . . . . .            | 5               |                 |
| Geneva . . . . .             | 35 by dil.      | 7               |

The valley of Sixt deserves much more attention than it has yet received. The contrast between its scenery and that of Chamonix is singular and striking. It is beautiful, rich in waterfalls, forests, and botanical treasures, and girdled by precipitous limestone mountains. Carriage travellers have a choice of roads for entering and leaving it. From Sixt to Geneva there are 2 carriage-roads—the post-road by Bonneville of 41 m., the road by St. Jeoire of 40 m. A diligence runs daily from Samoëns (leaving 5 A.M.) to Geneva in about 7 hrs.: 1-horse carriage from Sixt to Samoëns, 6 fr.; to Bonneville, 25 fr. A charming road crosses a low pass from Samoëns and descends the valley of the Dranse to Thonon. (See Rte.

145.) The best guide to Sixt is the charming volume by Mr. Alfred Wills, called 'The Eagle's Nest.'

#### A. GENEVA TO SIXT.

At Annemasse (4 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles) the Chamonix road is left. At La Bergue (Croix Blanche) the road to Thonon branches left. [This is the starting-point for the ascent of *Les Voirons*, a wooded mountain commanding fine views of the lake and surrounding Alps. The charms of its view were highly appreciated by the early explorers of the Savoy mountains, De Luc and Bourrit. The ascent occupies 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. There are two chalets on the mountain, which is accessible from all sides.]

The road passing through pleasant country and crossing a low watershed descends into the valley of a tributary of the Giffre before reaching (18 miles) St. Jeoire (Couronne).

(The Mole can be ascended from here in 4 hrs.)

Two miles further is Mieussy (several Inns). The road mounts beside the Giffre to Taninges (2103 ft.). (H. des Balances; Lion d'Or), whence the Buet is well seen—a market-town. The Abbey of Melan, founded in 1292 by Beatrix of Faucigny, is now a school.

[*Geneva to Sixt by Bonneville*.—From Bonneville the Sixt road keeps along the rt. bank of the Arve. At Marignier it crosses the Giffre and ascends to the village of Châtillon on the low ridge separating these rivers; hence there is a fine view. A short descent leads to Taninges.

A road from Cluses joins the Bonneville road at Châtillon. This is the shortest carriage-route from Chamonix to Sixt.]

The smiling valley contrasts with the bold forms of the limestone ranges, and the scenery continues charming to 36 miles

Samoëns, 2299 ft. (Croix d'Or, good; Post), situated in a smiling valley surrounded by green hill-sides. There are many pleasant short walks. The cascade of the Nant, d'Ant is worth a

visit. The *Mont Greyon* (8450 ft.), 4½ hrs., commands a view of *Mont Blanc*.

The road to Sixt mounts through the picturesque defile of *Les Tines*, and in about 5 miles reaches Sixt.

*Sixt* (2483 ft.) (*Inn*: *H. du Fer à Cheval*, a large house, once a convent, built 1622, fair). The *guides* at Sixt are inferior. *Tariff*—The *Buet*, 18 fr.; *Fer à Cheval*, 2 fr. 50 c.; *Lac de Gers*, 12 frs.; *Chamonix*, 15 fr.; *Champéry*, by *Col de Golèse*, 7 fr.; by *Col du Sageroux*, 9 fr. *A. Ranaud* is recommended as a good guide.

*Sixt* is but a small village, not so large as the neighbouring hamlet of *Salvagny*. It was formerly attached to a monastery, founded 1144 by *Ponce de Faucigny*. It is beautifully situated under a precipitous steep on the *Giffre Bas*, at a point where the 2 valleys of the *Giffre* converge like a *V*. A traveller standing on its little bridge sees to the rt. or *W.*, the lovely green mountain of the *Giètà*; *S.*, the *Pointe de Salles*; *S.E.*, between the 2 valleys, the wild heights of *La Grande Joux*; and *N.E.*, at the head of the *Giffre Bas*, the *Pic de Tenneverges*. Both valleys abound in waterfalls; perhaps the one most worth a visit is that of *Roujet*, an hour's distance from *Salvagny*, on the old path to the *Col d'Anterne*, and above it is another, beautiful both in shape and name—*La Pleureuse*, the *Weeper*, which fills the air with gentle murmurs.

*Excursions*.—*a.* To the *Fer à Cheval* (4 m.). Carriage there and back 8 fr. 4 hrs.' ride on a mule to the *Fond de la Combe* (6 m.) and back; mule with guide 8 fr. A very remarkable scene, which every one should visit. A gentle ascent by char-road leads up the fertile valley of the *Giffre Bas*, passing 2 villages. On the rt. is the *Grande Joux*, on the l. the *Pointe de Sambet* (see below), and, on looking back, the *Pointe de Pelouse* is seen over the *Giètà*. In 3 m. the road grows rough and steeper, as it

[*Stritz*.]

enters through a wild wood the *Fer à Cheval*. It reaches a central point at *Le Croic de Pelis*, the humble monument of 180 persons, buried with the village of *Entre Deux Nants*, 1602, by a fall from the rocks of the *Tête Noire*, 2 m. distant. It marks the spot where the avalanche stopped, and is still the object of an annual pilgrimage. The traveller here stands before a semicircular wall of precipices, rising sheer from the valley 1000 ft., and surmounted by other cliffs and green terraces, which reach their greatest elevation at the *N.E.* angle in the *Pic de Tenneverges*, 9778 ft., but the *Tête Noire* in the centre is little less in height. At the opposite end, above a series of wild gullies, is a point called *Le Cheval Blanc*, and beyond it a peep of the snows of the *Buet*. Streams fall from ledge to ledge, and leap down the final precipice, the nearest to the spectator being the *Méridienne*, on the face of the *Tenneverges*. There are pastures as well as glaciers above the cliffs.

From the *Fer à Cheval* the valley bends to the l., terminating in about 2 m. in the *Fond de la Combe*, shut in by lofty precipices. On the rt. (*E.*) is *Mont Ruau*, on the l. the *Pointe de Sambet*. On these apparently inaccessible heights mines have been worked, their adits being reached along narrow ledges, and it was on *Mont Ruau* that *Jacques Balmat*, "the hero of *Mont Blanc*," lost his life, at the age of 72, seeking for gold. In returning, a visit to the source of the last waterfall to the rt. before reaching Sixt will repay a walk of 15 min. up rather steep grass slopes and through a beech-wood. The path turns off at the mill. The water forming the cascade wells out of a single hole in the rock, and is said to be limpid at all seasons.

*b.* To the *Lac de Gers*, 3 hrs.' ride. The ascent to the l. of the *Giètà* is beautiful, but the lake itself uninteresting. The path winds up the mountain for 50 min., passing the cascade of *Pion* or *Gers*, nearly hidden in a deep cleft. A ravine is then

crossed, and the ascent continued to the Montagne de Porte, 50 min. Hence there is a very fine view of the Buet, Mont Blanc and Pointe de Salles. Hence to the Lac de Gers is a walk of 45 min. over ground nearly level. No guide required. In returning, go to the top of the *Giétin*, and a short way down the side towards Sixt, so as to look upon the village.

c. To the *Buet* (Rte. 138), 6 hrs. The path by the Col d'Anterne is left at Salvagny, and in 2 hrs. from Sixt the *Châlets des Fonds* (4541 ft.) (a small Inn) are reached. They are near Mr. Wills's house. From this there are two paths to the summit, one by the Col de Chaux (7200 ft.), the other and best is by the Baux Prés.

Travellers who are not going to Chamonix should ride to the head of the *Vallée des Fonds*.

The *Pointe de Sambet*, opposite the Fer à Cheval, has a very remarkable as well as magnificent view. Mule-path of 2 hrs. to *Salvador* chalets, 1 hr. from the top.

The *Pointe de Pelouse*, to the S.W., is another most commanding and easy peak, 8153 ft.

*Passes from Sixt.*—Several passes lead out of the Fer à Cheval. The Col de *Grenairon* leads from the green hollow l. of the centre to the Barberine glen, which is descended on the rt. bank to the Tête Noire path. The rocks on the Sixt side, which look so formidable, are not very difficult. The ascent to the other pass, the Col de *Tenneverges*, is by no means easy, passing along the ledges on the face of the Pointe de *Tenneverges*. There is another pass, the Col de *Buet*, passing E. of that mountain to Le Bérard; 10 or 11 hrs. may be allowed by these passes to the Barberine inn.

At the head of the Fond de la Combe is the Col du *Sagérour*, leading to Champéry in 9 or 10 hrs. from Sixt. The track mounts l. by rocky steps called *Pas de Boré* to the *Châlets de Boré* on the first shelf, and to a conspicuous rock, the *Pierre du Dard*

on the second shelf. Then rt. to the *Châlets de Vogelle* (3½ hrs. from Sixt), and over turf and débris to the Col (1 hr.) 7917 ft. This is a saddle of black earth, abutting E. on Mount Ruan, N. and S., falling to precipices. View of *Mont Blanc*, *Buet*, &c. The descent to the desolate glen of *Sézanne* requires care, and in snow may be dangerous, but the warm, black soil is generally free of snow. It is steep 50 yds. to the brink of the cliffs, which are skirted (turning l.) to a gap where they are descended, an iron rod being fixed at the most awkward point (½ hr.) Then straight down the débris to the glen, as there is another cliff to the rt. The glen descends E. to the Dent du Midi, and a considerable glacier on the flank of the *Tour Sallière*, and then opens l. to a precipitous gorge, falling to the Val d'Illicz. This is descended by a remarkable stairway called the *Pas d'Enfer*, down a series of cliffs, opposite the base of the Dent du Midi. Irons are placed at the most awkward points, and there is no difficulty. At the base of the rocks are the chalets and pasture of *Boarvour* (1 hr.), from which a good path descends steep forest to Champéry.

There is another pass from the Vogelle chalet, the Col de la *Golette*, reached by bearing l. (instead of rt.) towards a chimney of rock called *Golette d'Oulaz*. This is climbed, and then snow-slopes to the col. A second ridge is crossed to reach the chalets of Barme, in the central of the 3 diverging branches of the Val d'Illicz.

The *Pic de Tenneverges* (9803 ft.) may be ascended in 6 hrs. from the Col du *Sagérour*, by the glacier of Mont Ruan; also up the cliffs from the valley.]

The *Chaîne des Frêtes*, dividing the valley of the Arve from that of the Giffre, though steep at the sides, forms extensive undulating pastures around the summits, and between the *Aig. de Favens* and *Pte. de Salles*, a very remarkable plain, called the *Désert de Platei*, of nearly bare rock cut by parallel fissures. There are

several passes across the range to the valley of the Arve, described below in the reverse direction.

*e.* From Cluses, in about 9 hrs. The ascent is from Bellegarde, 5 m. on the road to Chamonix. In a hollow above the cliffs the path divides, rt. leading through pine-forest, by *Colonnaz*, to (2 hrs. 30 m.) the chalets and pretty *Lac de Flaine*, which is drained by a subterranean channel. Thence 3 hrs., E.N.E., across the ridge N. of "les Grands Vents" to the *Lac de Gers*, 2 hrs. from Sixt. A local guide is expedient.

*f.* The Lac de Flaine is also reached from *St. Martin*, the path commencing beyond the cascade of *Nant d'Arpeniz*, 3 m. towards Cluses. It bears l. to *Tehu*, and from the gorge beyond rt. to the lake. A finer rte. from *St. Martin* ascends the *Val de Hâon* to the *Chalets de Véran*, which stand apparently in a cul de sac of cliffs. But these, though difficult, can be climbed to higher pastures, beyond which lies the *Col de Monthieu*, between the *Croix de Fer*, l., *Colomé*, rt. The traveller has here reached the singular *Désert de Platei*, from which he can descend either by the Lac de Flaine or Vallon de Salles, but a guide will be necessary.

The finest of all these paths is from *Passy*, a village between *St. Martin* and *Servoz*. It ascends the wooded glen of *Plane Joux* to precipices, up which a curious but safe staircase leads to the *Chalets de Platei* at the top, 3 hrs. from *Passy*. Thence ascent to *La Portette*, a depression in the ridge connecting the *Rochers des Fys* with the *Aig. de Varens*. This commands a most remarkable view of the *Désert de Platei*. The descent is by the *Désert*, *Lac de Flaine*, or *Chalets de Salles*, 2½ hrs. from *Sixt*.

#### B. CHAMONIX TO SIXT.

Carriage travellers must go round by Cluses and Taninges, but for mule-riders the following route is preferable.

Chamonix to Sixt by the *Col d'Anterne*, is a ride of 10½ hrs. (not in-

cluding halts), a walk of from 9 to 10 hrs., by an excellent mule-path. A guide costs 18 fr., a mule 18 fr. (including back-fare), but a guide is not wanted, as the path is well-marked. Provisions should be taken. The ascent from Chamonix is described in *Rte. 138*, as far as *Plan Pratz* (an Inn), whence a few zigzags lead up to the cleft of mica-schist, which forms the

*Col du Brévent*, 8075 ft. Hence *Mont Blanc* is seen through a framework of rock, and in the opposite direction the wild mountains over which the course lies to the *Col d'Anterne*. They are bounded by the precipices of the *Rochers des Fys*, which terminate over *Servoz* in the *Aig. de Varens*, over *Sixt* in the *Pointe de Salles*. The path, passing 2 or 3 hovels, called *Chalets d'Arlevaz*, descends to a lonely bridge in the depths of the valley of the *Dioza*, which joins the Arve at *Servoz*. The ferns form quite a jungle, and the sow-thistles are 6 ft. high. This valley runs up to the *Buet*, which may be reached by turning rt. and crossing the *Col de Solenton*. Beyond the bridge a green alp is climbed, past the cattle-chalets of *Moïde* (fossil ferns in a gully to the rt.), and then, where the path from *Servoz* falls in, the track bears to the rt., and mounts in zigzags to the

*Col d'Anterne*, 7425 ft., "one of the blackest, barrenest and most desolate spots in the world." It, however, commands a grand view of *Mont Blanc* and the *Glacier des Bossons*, which, at this distance, appear in their true proportions, rising nobly over the *Brévent*. Farther l. are the *Aiguilles Rouges*, and close to the col the remarkable precipices of the *Rochers des Fys*, the pass lying over a ridge which connects this chain with the *Buet*. The descent winds over bare and desolate ground, by the lonely *Lac d'Anterne*, to the *Bas du Col d'Anterne*. This is a fine point of view on the *Plateau d'Anterne*, just opposite the *Buet*, which forms a cirque of precipices. To the l. is the *Pointe de Salles*. A steep slope brings

the traveller to the *Châlets des Grasses Chèvres*, from which the old path descended l. along the face of the Pointe de Salles. The present bridle-road turns sharply rt. down the *Chemin des Grasses Chèvres*, partly through an old pine-forest, to the head of the *Vallee des Fonds*. Here it crosses the Ruisseau des Fonds, and falls in with the path from the Col de l'Échaud and Buet. It passes the *Châlets des Fonds* and Mr. Wills's Eagle's Nest (4541 ft., or 2000 ft. above Sixt), and after a short but sharp descent to the junction of the Ruisseau with the Giffre Haut, runs down this remarkably deep and narrow valley, most of the way through dense wood. About half-way to Sixt the traveller passes the *Croix d'Espérit*. Emerging from the forest he crosses the dry bed of a torrent from the *Grande Joux*, opposite the lowest of 3 waterfalls which descend from the Vallon de Salles, and enters the large village of *Salvagny*. Here the valley opens, and in a few minutes more the path reaches the Giffre Bas at Sixt.

### ROUTE 144.

SIXT TO CHAMPÉRY AND MONTHEY—  
VAL D'ILLIEZ.

|                         | Hrs.  |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Samoëns . . . . .       |       |
| Col de Golèze . . . . . | 2½    |
| Col de Coux . . . . .   | 2½    |
| Champéry . . . . .      | 2     |
|                         | <hr/> |
|                         | 7     |

There is a rough pass to Champéry by the Col de Sageroux, Rte. 143, but ordinary tourists prefer the mule-path over the Col de Golèze and the Col de Coux.

From Sixt to Samoëns is a carriage-road, Rte. 143. There is a turning to the char-road to the Col de Golèze, a little short of Samoëns. The char-road ascends through a gorge and woods. [Rt. up a savage glen is a track to the Col de la Golette (Rte. 143).] Where the road ends the path turns l., crossing a little bridge, and leaving a hamlet in a pretty dell rt., and mounts

a channel of loose stones between meadows. By a short but steep cut to the rt. the path may be considerably shortened. When the pastures are reached the track improves, and, turning sharp rt. at some chalets, winds towards the col, with a fine view of a range of limestone precipices. The Col de Golèze is about 5482 ft., and on the other side of it are some chalets, where wine, milk, and bread and cheese are sometimes to be had. The traveller now sees to the N.E. the opposite and higher ridge of the valley of the Drance, which separates him from the Val d'Illeiez, together with the path and the cross on the Col de Coux. Looking back over Samoëns, the *Croix de Fer*, above St. Martin, is a striking peak.

The path goes pretty straight down the valley, and about half-way down is a sulphureous spring. About 800 ft. below the Col the path winds to the rt. under some cliffs, and then strikes up the woods of the opposite valley.

The Col de Coux (6322 ft.) has a far finer view than that from the Col de Golèze. Just below the col, which is on the boundary of Savoy and the Valais, is a small chalet for refreshment. The descent to Champéry takes nearly 2 hrs., and is at first, and at two other points, rather steep. It is a very pretty walk, with view of the Dent du Midi and *Tour Sallière*. At one point the path rises, but soon falls again, and winds to the rt. to

Champéry (3400 ft.) (*Inns*: Hôtel et Pension de la Dent du Midi, a large, good house; pension 6 fr.; baths in a building opposite; Croix Fédérale, smaller). This village of about 50 wooden houses, some very old, lies on a mountain shelf, high above the torrent, in the midst of beautiful scenery, and directly opposite the Dent du Midi.

Tariff (in the hotel) for guides, and a list of 44 excursions, with prices and times, from the latter one-fifth may be deducted. For horses and mules the same prices as for guides: — 1-horse carriage to the *ply. at Monthey* 9 fr., in 1½ hr. down, 3 hrs. up; *Bex*, 13 fr.; *St. Tryphon Stat.*,

12 fr. Diligence to Monthey every morning at 8.15.

Just above Champéry the valley is split into 3 branches. 1st, rt., to the Col de Coux; 2nd, to the Châlets of Barne, Col de la Golette, and Dents Blanches; 3rd, l., to the Châlets of Bonavaux, Dent du Midi, La Tour Sallière, and Cols de Sézanfe and Sagérourx. Just below the village the united streams from these sources run under a long wall of rock, above which are pastures, and then the precipices of the Dent du Midi.

*Pleasant and easy Walks.*—a. To *La Galerie Defago*, a terrace cut on the precipice above the stream. b. To the *Croix de Cult*, 3 hrs.; fine view of Dent du Midi. c. Up the Viège to *Châlets de Barne*. d. *Châlets de Bonavaux*. Descend to a bridge near a fine waterfall, back to Champéry, 3 hrs. e. To the *Lac d'Anthémoz*, under the precipices of the Dent du Midi, 4 hrs.

The chief excursion is the ascent of the *Dent du Midi* (10,450 ft.), of which the rugged and seemingly inaccessible crags form so striking an object from the E. end of the lake of Geneva. The most direct route, but fit only for good mountaineers, is up the rocks opposite Champéry by the *Croix de Zelèze*, in 5½ hrs. The ordinary rte. (guide 15 fr., with descent to Sixt 25 fr.) passes the *Châlets of Bonavaux*, 1½ hr., and the ravine beyond them by the curious staircase of the *Pas d'Enfer* to the glen of Susanfe, and thence, turning l., full in view of the *Tour Sallière*, climbs the S.W. buttress of the mountain by long slopes of débris. The ascent is laborious, but free from danger. It is generally made in 6 or 7 hrs., and may be shortened by sleeping at the châlets of Bonavaux, where there are civil people and tolerable quarters. From Champéry the guides usually start at 1 A.M. The view is magnificent, including the greater part of the Pennine chain and the nearer Alps of Bex.

Descent can be made by the *Col de Susanfe* (7940 ft.), between the Dent du Midi and Tour Sallière, to Ver-

nayaz or to the Tête Noire, or by the *Col de Sagérourx* (Rte. 143) to Sixt.

The *Tour Sallière* (10,587 ft.), not seen from Champéry, but rising just S. of the Dent du Midi, is the highest peak of the district, and can be ascended. Guide 20 fr. Between it and Mt. Ruan is the glacier pass of *Col de la Tour Sallière*, leading to the Barbérine inn (Rte. 141).

The *Dent de Bonavaux* (8281 ft.) is another fine point of view on the N. side of the Susanfe glen, and nearly opposite the Col du Sagérourx.

The beautiful *Val d'Illiez* is about 9 m. in length from Champéry to Monthey. N. of it is the *Val de Morgin*, with a frequented *hotel et pension*; whence a pass leads into the *Val d'Abondance*, a tributary of the Dranse (Rte. 145). These three valleys nearly meet at their heads in the neighbourhood of the Col de Coux; and *Morgin* (4½ hrs.) and *Abondance*, with *hotel* and *abbey*, are excursions from Champéry by the prettily named *Portes du Soleil* (3 hrs.).

The road down the valley was completed in 1870.

At *Trois Torrents*, 3 m. from Champéry, is a large hotel and pension, prettily situated. Here vines and walnut-trees begin, and the road leaving the side of the valley, twists under walnut-trees and amongst the celebrated erratic blocks of Monthey (Rte. 57) down to the village of *Monthey* (1380 ft.) (Inn: Croix) on the line from Bouveret or Martigny. There the 'Ligne d'Italie' railway may be taken, or, if preferable, 2 m. of dusty road brings him to

*Ollon St. Tryphon Stat.* (no inn—no carriages) on the Villeneuve line (Rte. 56).

## ROUTE 145.

THE VALLEY OF THE DRANSE. THONON TO TANINGES, SAMOENS, CHAMPÉRY, OR MORGIN.

The smiling and picturesque valleys which lie S. of the Lake of Geneva

are little visited by English tourists, who follow the regular round by Sallanches, Chamonix, and the Tête Noire, without seeking for variations.

Since their annexation to France, these valleys have been made more accessible by improvements in the roads, and offer charming approaches to Mont Blanc.

A. *Thonon to Taninges*, a new carriage-road, about 30 m.

The new road penetrates a very picturesque defile, clothed in chestnut-woods, to the junction of the three Dranses. Avoiding the old ascent to the hamlet of La Vernaz, it mounts steadily along the l. bank of the main stream through charming scenery. The village of *Le Biot* is passed on the l., and 2 m. further, on the rt., the ruins of the *Abbaie d'Aulph*, founded by St. Bernard. Opposite Mont Riond, the road to Taninges leaves the valley and ascends to the col of *Les Glets*, so named from a village said to have been founded by Jews exiled from Florence in the 14th century (3076 ft.), whence a descent of nearly 2000 ft. leads to Taninges (see Rte. 143).

B. *Thonon to Samoëns*.—From the point where the Taninges road quits the Dranse, a road leads in 2 m. to *Morzine* (H. du Chamois), a hamlet rendered famous by the strange hysterical malady which prevailed among its female inhabitants (1857-64), and more recently by a great landslide, which has closed many of its slate-quarries.

Three mule-passes lead from here to Samoëns: the *Col de Jourplane* and *Col de Nanyolet*, in about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hrs., are the most direct. Travellers can also, by following the valley to its head, reach the track of the *Col de Golèze* (Rte. 144).

c. *Thonon to Champéry or Morgin*.

Champéry may be reached from Morzine by the *Col de Coux*, or from Mont Riond by a very picturesque route, ascending by the Lake of Mont Riond to the *Col de Chésery*. This

overlooks the Vallée de Morgin, but, by ascending to the rt., the ridge overhanging Champéry, known as the *Portes du Soleil*, is easily reached, and a direct descent leads to that village. Mont Riond to Champéry  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.

The easiest route, however, between Thonon and Val d'Illeiez follows the course of the Dranse d'Abondance. A road has been made over the Pas de Morgin. It is about 36 m. from Thonon to Monthey. The road described above is followed as far as La Vernaz. Hence a country road mounts the l. bank of the Dranse d'Abondance to *La Vacheresse* (*Inn*: La Croix), 14 m. from Thonon. 6 m. further is

*Notre Dame d'Abondance* (*Inn*: Mont de Grange). Here was a Benedictine monastery, founded 1108. The *ch.* is in part of the same date, and contains some curious antiquities. Above this village the valley of the Dranse expands into a rich pastoral basin.

The next hamlet is *La Chapelle* (Croix); beyond it, 26 m. from Thonon, is *Châtel*, the last in the valley. Hence the new road crosses the *Pas de Morgin* to the Baths of the same name,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from La Chapelle, and only  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. below the pass (Rte. 143).

## ROUTE 146.

AOSTA TO PONTE IN VAL D'ORCO, BY  
COGNE AND THE VAL SOANA.

| Aosta to—                   | Hrs.<br>walking. |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Aimaville (high road) . . . | 1                |
| Cogne . . . . .             | 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  |
| Highest chalets . . . . .   | 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  |
| Col della Nouva . . . . .   | 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  |
| Campiglia . . . . .         | 3                |
| Ponte . . . . .             | 4                |

The district of which Cogné is the natural centre has long been to mountaineers one of the most interesting in the Alps, and in the last few years the improvements made in the inns and the construction of new paths have laid it open to ordinary travel-





lers, who, however, have as yet been slow in availing themselves of their opportunity.

The peaks and glaciers of the central group of the Graian Alps are of singular beauty, and some of the valley scenery, especially in the S. valleys, is wild and striking. Owing to its strict preservation for the sport of the late King of Italy, the bouquetin, extinct elsewhere in the Alps,\* still finds a home in this range, and chamois may be met with in large herds. The king's hunting-paths run in all directions through the mountains, and are of the greatest use to travellers.

The following tour may be recommended:—

Becca di Nona (on foot from Combœ, or by the valley mule-road to Cogne).

Ascent of the Pointe des Poussets.

The Col de Lauzon to Val Savaranche.

The Col de la Croix de Nivolet to Ceresole and Ponte.

By one of the passes leading to Val Champorcher, back to Val d'Aosta. The whole circuit may be performed on mules.

N.B. It is advisable to send notice beforehand to the landlord at Cogne, to prepare, if the party be large, as all provisions come from Aosta.

Above Aosta, between Aimaville and Livrogne, a distance of 5 m., the valleys of Cogne, Savaranche, Rhêmes and Grisanche, diverge like the spokes of a wheel. The general direction of the Val de Cogne is S. by E., that of Grisanche W. by S. On the N.E. the Val de Cogne is separated from the Val d'Aosta by the range of *Mt. Emilius* (11,677 ft.); on the W. from Val Savaranche by the beautiful peak of the *Griola* (13,028 ft.) and *Grand Paradis* (13,300); on the S. from Val d'Orco, by a glacier-covered

range running E. from the Grand Paradis, and including the summits of *La Rossa Vira*, 11,956 ft., *Tour du Grand St. Pierre*, 12,054 ft., *Pic d'Ondezuna*, and *Punta di Lavina*, 10,825 ft.

From Aosta (Rte. 1:4) a road leads directly down to the river Doire, which is crossed on a wooden bridge, and it then ascends the S. bank through the villages of Gressan and Jovencon to *Aimaville*, where a fantastical building spoils one of the finest sites in the valley. A knoll jutting out into it is surmounted by a square mass of masonry, with an ugly gallery, erected in the early part of the last century. Within it is an ancient armoury of the barons of Aimaville. It is now inhabited by the Contessa di Rocca Chaland.

[There is another road, better for pedestrians, on the rt. bank, passing an old castle where Anselm is said to have been educated.]

From Aimaville the ascent is steep to the hamlet of St. Martin. The view from the crest above it is one of the finest in the Val d'Aosta. The city is seen as in a glorious frame, and beyond it the peaks of Monte Rosa.

Soon after losing sight of Aosta, the tops of the cottages of *Pont d'Ael* are seen far below, clustered with a few trees, and near a white line which crosses the ravine. This is one of the most remarkable of the Roman structures remaining in the Val d'Aosta, a Roman covered bridge and aqueduct, of which the latter now forms a roadway. It is nearly 400 ft. above the torrent, which it crosses by a single arch; immediately above the arch, and under the present road, is the ancient gallery, 180 ft. long, 14 ft. high, 3 ft. wide, and lit through slits in the wall. The vault is composed of the slabs which formed the bed of the ancient watercourse, and the gallery is entered at each end by arched ports. This singular work is in perfectly sound condition, though built, as a still legible and even sharp inscription indicates, by Caius Aimus and his son, of Padua, in the thirtieth year of Augustus. Their name is still preserved in the village and

\* The last bouquetin was shot in Canton Glarus in 1550. They were scarce in the Engadine in 1612. One was shot on the St. Gothard in the middle of the last century, when they also existed in the Mont Blanc chain. According to Mr. Hinchliff, one was shot on the Grandes Jorasses in 1856. There are said to be now 2000 in the Graian Alps!

château of Aimaville. This inscription is placed on a tablet just over the arch on the lower side towards the valley of Aosta. A path leads down to it from the Cogne road.

From Aosta to Pont d'Ael by the route described is about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours' walk. From Courmayeur there is a shorter way, winding round the slope of the hill, from Villeneuve.

To reach Cogne it is not necessary to retrace one's steps, as a direct path leads back to the road from Pont d'Ael. The valley for a long way above the village is a deep ravine. Opposite to a spot where the path turns suddenly into a deep rift is a slide, down which trees are discharged, for the chance of the torrent floating them to the Val d'Aosta. Not one in ten escapes being broken into splinters.

The difficulties of constructing a road by which the productions of the valley could be brought down, are obvious. The defile opens a little near some iron-works, and from where the river is crossed to its l. bank, the road to Cogne was made by two brothers, iron-masters, who have recorded its formation on a tablet in a rock, and it has been much improved at the expense of the commune. There is very little cultivation in the valley, as the mines, until lately, gave occupation to its inhabitants; every stream drove its tilt hammer, and almost every person was employed in working, smelting, or forging the iron. Within the last few years, however, the company has failed, and the stoppage of the works led to great distress among the inhabitants.

The road crosses to the rt. bank by the Pont de Laval, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. later the traveller reaches *Epinel*, the first hamlet of the Cogne district.  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. *Cretaz*; and in 20 min. (18 m. from Aosta).

*Cogne* (Inn: H. de La Grivola, fair, improving; H. Royal). The Curé Chamoin is well acquainted with the country. *Elisée Jeantet* is a good

guide for expeditions of moderate difficulty. A fair tariff.

Cogne, 5000 ft. above the sea, is the centre of the Graian Alps. Its position may be compared to that of Pontresina. The Val Nontey opening answers to that of Val Roseg. But the scenery as a whole is more imposing than that of the Engadine. The village is beautifully situated at the junction of 3 valleys, amidst charming meadows, which contrast strikingly with the barren scenes through which the traveller has passed. It commands, through the gorge of the Val de Cogne, the summit of *Mont Blanc*, and S. the noble chain of the *Grand Paradis*, with the glaciers of Grancrou and Monei. The beautiful Grivola is concealed by intervening heights.

The abandoned iron-mines may be reached in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. by a steep ascent. The iron was worked in the face of the mountain, and seems to be of almost unlimited extent. A vast surface of pure ore, yielding from 70 to 80 per cent. of metal, is exposed to open day. The height of the mines above the valley is at least 3000 ft., and as much as 120 rubbie or 3000 lbs. of ore were brought down at once, upon sledges worked by men in a most extraordinary manner.

The church, A.D. 1642, stands on the site of an older edifice built in 1202, the belfry of which was destroyed in 1838. The tower-like house near it dates from 1270, and was the stronghold of the Bishops of Aosta.

#### Excursions—

The *Pointe des Poussets*, commanding a most wonderful near view of the Grivola. From *Cretaz* (1 m.) travellers will follow a mule-path S.W. up a glen to the *Chalets of Ours dessus* (good milk), cross a ridge rt. to *Poussets dessus*, and then climb steep debris for 1 hr. This will bring them to a ridge of rocks circling round the head of the glacier de Trajo, 10,048 ft. above the sea, and about 5 hrs. from Cogne (guide 6 fr.). The slender and towering Grivola is seen across the hollow filled by the glacier. The rocky head overlooking the valley has

lately been made accessible for tourists.

The *Grivola*, 13,028 ft., a pyramidal peak as remarkable for the boldness as for the beauty of its tapering form, was first ascended, after attempts on the S.W. arête by Mr. Tuckett, from the W. side by Mr. Ormsby's guide, A. Dayné, a very difficult ascent repeated in 1876 by the Rev. F. T. Wethered. M. Chamonin made the first ascent by the route now generally followed. He climbed the S.E. rocks to the top in 3 hrs. from the Gl. de Trajo, and met with no unusual difficulties. The ascent is now frequently made. It is a long day from Cogne, which may be shortened by sleeping at the Pousset chalets. The guides charge 25 fr. The summit has also been reached from the N. and E. by laborious routes.

The *Grand Paradis* (13,300 ft.), the highest mountain entirely in Italy, was first ascended from the Val Savaranche. It has also been climbed from Cogne, by the Glacier de la Tribulation, then by couloirs and the rocks between them. The ascent from this side requires first-rate icemen, and is rendered laborious by the distance of the mountain from any shelter.

The *Tour du Grand St. Pierre* (12,054 ft.) may be ascended from Cogne by the Val Nontey, returning by the Col de Telleccio and Valeiglia. It is a long and stiff glacier expedition.

The *Puntu di Tersiva* (11,500 ft.) is easy of access for fair mountaineers, and commands one of the finest general views in the neighbourhood, surpassing that of the Becca di Nona. It is an expedition of 11 to 12 hrs. from Cogne (6 up, and 4 down). It may be varied by ascending by the path of the Fenêtre de Cogne, and returning by Val de Grauson, one of the highest pasturage valleys in the Alps, near the entrance to which are noble views of the Grand Paradis.

*Mont Emilius* may also be ascended without difficulty from Cogne, by the Val de Grauson or the Col de Garin. It is a long day's walk for a trained pedestrian,

The village of *Gimillan*, N. of Cogne, commands a fine view and is an object for a short walk.

Many passes lead from Cogne to the neighbouring valleys.

For fair walkers there is a rte. from Aosta, longer but more interesting than the valley road, by ascending to the chalets of Combœ, on the way to the *Becca di Nona*, and thence crossing the ridge nearly due S., by the *Col de Garin*, which commands a magnificent view of the Grivola and Grand Paradis. It is quite possible to ascend the Becca di Nona, and cross to Cogne, in one long day from Aosta. See Rte. 134. W. of the Col de Garin are two lower passes, *Col du Drinc* and *Col de Traséhe*, both practicable for mules, from Cogne to the hermitage of St. Grat and Aosta in 7 or 8 hrs. Both command noble views.

The *Pas de Lore* is a steep, rough, and little used pass, leading by the E. side of Mont Emilius and the Val de Lore to *Brissogne*, a village 3 m. below Aosta.

The *Col du Coronas*, or *Pas de St. Marcel*, is a fair mule-path leading from the Val de Grauson by the Val de St. Marcel to Val d'Aosta. It commands a fine view of the Montey Rosa chain and Grand Combin.

*Val Savaranche* is best reached by the *Col de la Combe de Cogne* (or *Col de Lauzon*), a fine and easy mule-pass (one of the royal hunting-paths).

From the head of the Val Nontey the well-constructed path mounts rt. in easy zigzags to a plateau where the late king had a shooting-box with 7 rooms. A less steep ascent leads to the pass (5 hrs.) where a loop-holed wall has been constructed for the royal sportsman. A descent of 2 hrs., with superb views of the Grivola and Grand Paradis, leads to the *Châlets of Liviona*, whence there are 3 paths to Val Savaranche (2 hrs., less on foot).

The *Val d'Orco* is attained by several first-class glacier-passes. The most attractive is the *Col de Grancrou*

(10,833 ft.), leading from the head of the Val Nontey to the lower end of the Scalare di Ceresole. This is a first-rate glacier-pass. All the difficulty is on the N. side, but the descent is intricate, and without a local guide time will be lost. The Baths of Ceresole may be reached by this route in about 11 hrs.

The *Col de Monei* is also a stiff glacier-pass, and leads from the Val Nontey to Val Piantonetto and Locana.

The *Col de Telleccio* (10,925 ft.) is approached on the E. side from the Combe de Valeiglia. The pass is free from difficulty, though a considerable extent of glacier is crossed, and none of the usual precautions can be omitted. A local guide is desirable. From Cogne to Locana, by this route, is a day's walk of 10 or 11 hrs.

From Cogne to *Val Soana*, the *Col de Sengies* affords, perhaps, the finest glacier route. It is a narrow gap at the S. foot of the *Pointe de Sengies*, and is approached on both sides by steep but easy rock gullies. That on the W. is gained by the E. branch of the Valeiglia glacier. The pass leads into *Val di Forzo*, the S.W. branch of Val Soana, a very wild glen with several poor hamlets, but no inns.

The *Col du Forzo* is another high glacier-pass approached on the W. by the small glacier lying E. of the Valeiglia.

For the other passes, see below.

The road up the valley ascends beside the torrent, and soon enters another basin, at the head of which, opposite the hamlet of Lilaz, it ascends the mountain side, leaving on the rt. the Combe de Valeiglia, which runs up to an amphitheatre of glaciers. The steep path passes over what appears to be a vast dyke in the valley; the torrent flows round it to escape through a ravine at one extremity. After crossing the ridge, the traveller finds himself on a more wild and open ground, leading to the pasturages of Chavanis. Some of

the lower chalets are soon reached, and further up on this fine alp, which feeds large flocks and herds during the summer, the cluster known as the *Chalets of Chavanis*. From this point the chain may be crossed in many places. There are two principal routes to the Val Soana—

a. The *Col de Bardonney* (9679 ft.), a wild, steep, but easy pass, leading partly over glacier and under the W. side of the *Punta di Lavina* to Val di Forzo, the savage E. branch of Val Soana. There is no inn short of Ronco (8½ hrs.).

b. The *Col della Nouva*, also known as the *Col de l'Arietta*. It is 9664 ft. above the sea, and 4 hrs. from Cogne; for the last 20 min. by a royal path which has been lately made by the side of the glacier. The Col is elevated and very narrow, the view from it towards the S. magnificent; in clear weather Turin is visible—seen over and far beyond the deep Val Campiglia, which lies at the foot of the traveller, and seemingly of a perpendicular descent. Towards the N. Monte Rosa and Mont Blanc can both be seen by climbing a rugged rock on the rt. The descent is excessively steep, but quite safe, bearing l. to the valley of Campiglia; where the path leads gently down through scenes of continually increasing beauty. On looking back the pass appears guarded by inaccessible precipices.

3 hrs. from the col is *Campiglia* (no Inn), a wretched hamlet, whose male inhabitants for the most part migrate in winter into the plains of Italy to exercise their trades of coppersmith and lampmaker.

½ hr. *Cordonera*. Here Rte. c falls in.  
½ hr. *Ronco* (see below).

c. A longer but more varied and beautiful road, barely practicable for mules, is found by leaving the former path on the rt. at Chavanis, and turning l. up a steep and difficult ascent to a col, called the *Fenêtre de Champorcher*, the pass by which the Cogne valley communicates by

Val Champorcher with the lower Val d'Aosta. From this point the view of the Alps which bound the Val de Cogne on the W. is magnificent, from the grandeur of their forms and the extent of ice. The glaciers which crest the northern side of the Val d'Orco range are also striking. They form a barrier to the S. of Val Champorcher, which opens into Val d'Aosta (Rte. 134), at Fort Bard.

The descent to the head of the *Val Champorcher* is steep. The little chapel of Notre Dame de la Neige, on the brink of one of several little lakes, is passed, in a savage situation.

The path now skirts, as it leaves it on the rt., a dark and enormous mountain mass, and descends rapidly, but nothing habitable appears. The valley deepens considerably on the l.: the eye can trace its course down towards Bard, and across it a path which leads from the village of *Champorcher* by the *Châlets* of *Dondegna* into the valley of *Fenis*.

After skirting a buttress of the mountain the path reaches the bank of a torrent just where it issues from a glacier; then, crossing another ridge over a beautiful pasturage, it descends to the borders of a little lake at the foot of the *Col di Reale*.

[From this spot to *Fort Bard* down the valley of *Champorcher* is about 4 hrs. About 12 hrs. altogether from *Cogne*. The mule-road is bad, although it has been repaired for the convenience of the late King of Italy, who built his first shooting-box at the head of it. There is a rough inn at *Champorcher*. (See Rte. 134.)]

Turning abruptly to the rt. the path leads in less than an hour to the summit of the ridge separating the *Val Champorcher* from the E. branch of the *Val di Soana*, sometimes called *Col di Champorcher* and sometimes *Col di Reale*, and which commands a very fine Alpine panorama. The descent on the other side is rapid. Passing to the l. under a beetling mountain, the path skirts a deep ravine, leaves on the rt. some old adits of a mine

worked unprofitably for silver, and in 2 hrs. passes some *châlets*. The level of the pine-forest is soon reached, and deep in a little plain is seen the church and village of *Val Pra*, the highest in the *Val Soana*.

At the opposite extremity of this little plain, the path descends by a stunted pine-forest, and through the depths of the valley to the village of *Pianei* and by one or two little hamlets to the village of *Ciampanella*. There is nothing peculiar in this part of the valley, until just before reaching the hamlet of *Bosco del Roco*, there are the remains of a slip from the mountain, which took place in 1833, and strewed the little plain with rocks and stones. At the hamlet of *Cordonera*, 2½ hrs. from *Val Pra*, the track falls into that from the *Col della Nouva*.

*Ronco*, chief place in the *Val di Soana* (a fair *Inn*); below it, a bridge, in a wild and striking situation, leads across a ravine to the village of *Ingria*.

The inhabitants of this valley wear a singular sort of shoe or boot; it is made of coarse woollen, tied tight round the ankle, but half as broad again as the foot; its use gives an awkwardness to their gait.

Below *Ingria* the valley becomes a ravine of singularly wild and grand character. Vast precipices, gorges and forests, offer alternately, sometimes together, their magnificent materials for Alpine scenery. The road descends to the level of the river, here so hemmed in by rocks that it has been necessary to cut a passage through them. Enormous overhanging masses hide *Ponte* from view, but beyond it the plains of *Piedmont* appear.

A descent through a forest, and near some quarries, leads to the *Villa Nuova* of *Ponte*, built round the cotton-works established by the *Baron du Port*, and about half a mile farther is

2½ hrs. *Ponte* (*Inn*: al *Valentino*, clean, and fair quarters) (1590 ft.), \*

singular old town (4600 Inhab.), its streets lined with arcades, under which the market is held.

The picturesque situation of this place at the confluence of the Soana and the Orco can hardly be exceeded, rich in vineyards, enclosed by mountains, offering, in combination with the surrounding scenery, the towers and ruins of two feudal *castles* in the most striking positions, and the head of the valley closed by the snowy peaks of the lofty range which divides the Val d'Orco from the Tarentaise. The parish *church* is on an eminence, above the town, which commands a fine view of the junction of the valleys, and of the Val d'Orco as far as Cuorné. It was restored in the 11th cent. The original church is said to have been one of the earliest Christian places of worship in this part of Italy.

The establishment of the *Fabbrica*, the first cotton-works known in Piedmont, has given employment to hundreds of men, women, and children. The raw material is imported from Genoa.

Ponte is 5 m. distant from

*Cuorné* (*Inns*: Leone d'Oro, tolerable; Corona Grossa), a large town on the W. side of the Orco. A good walker may go from Cogne to Cuorné in a day across the Col della Nouva. Hence there is a branch line to Turin. The old road continues through *Valperga*, celebrated for having one of the noblest campaniles in Piedmont; *Rivarolo*; *Lombardore*, where the river Mallone is crossed; and *Legni*; besides numerous villages. All these places are towns, and situated in the richest part of Piedmont, amidst Indian corn, vines, mulberry and fig-trees. Those which are placed on the subsidences of the Alps, a little above the plain, are surrounded by vine-covered hills, and backed by lofty mountains. Little idea can be formed of the richness and beauty of Piedmont, except by those who have skirted the mountains on the border of its rich plains, and the traveller may still do well to prefer the road

to the rail, when the former is not too dusty.

## ROUTE 147.

PONTE TO VILLENEUVE, BY THE VAL D'ORCO AND VAL SAVARANCHE.

| Ponte.                       | Hrs. |
|------------------------------|------|
| Locana . . . . .             | 2½   |
| Noasca . . . . .             | 2½   |
| Inn and Baths of Ceresole .  | 1½   |
| Chapis . . . . .             | 2½   |
| Col de la Croix de Nivolet . | 2½   |
| Pont . . . . .               | 2½   |
| Val Savaranche . . . . .     | 2    |
| Villeneuve . . . . .         | 3½   |

Vaccarone and Nigra's 'Guida per le Valli dell' Orco, &c.,' will be found useful in this district.

About 18 hours' walk: distances approximate. Char-road to within 3 m. of Noasca.

The Baths of *Ceresole Reale* afford fair accommodation. Mail-carriage from Cuorné (Rte. 146) to Locana, where baggage and riding mules may be secured by writing beforehand to the Director of the Baths.

Above *Ponte* the road runs the whole way on the l. bank of the river. The scenery is very fine; the forms of the mountains vast, rugged, and grand, clothed with magnificent chestnut-trees, and frequently exhibiting the effects of disintegration in the enormous blocks which have fallen from the heights, in many places in such quantity that the road is carried over or around them in a most sinuous course, giving a variety of views.

About 3 m. from *Ponte* is the village of *Sparone*. Many little hamlets lie on the road, and many usines are worked for small iron wares with tilts, and no stream is allowed to remain idle, where, at a small cost, and with simple machinery, it can be made to tilt a hammer, or move a saw.

*Locana*, a town of 5871 Inhab., the streets narrow and dirty. (*Inns*: Cervo; Tre Pernici, tolerable.) [Hence easy passes lead to Ceres and Lanzo (Rte. 156A).] Above *Locana* the road

is rougher, but practicable for chars for 3 miles, as far as a lonely and wretched *Inn* called Val Pra. Beyond this point there is only a mule-path, winding up amidst enormous masses of fallen granite and serpentine, some of which have blocked up the course of the torrent, and compelled it to find another channel—these, and the savage mountains, give great wildness to the valley. Yet the tortuous road rising over these *éboulements* often leads to charming little plains between them. The traveller passes on the rt. the wild Val Piantonetto, leading by the *Col de Telleccio* (Rte. 146) to Cogne, and several hamlets, each more and more miserable, until the climax of wretchedness is found at *Noasca* (a rough *Inn*), 3 hrs. from Locana, which has pointed a proverb—

Noasca, Noasca,  
Poco pane, lunga tasca.

Here the grand cataract of the *Noaschetti*, descending from the *Col de Grandcrou* (Rte. 146), bursts out from a rift in a mountain mass of granite, where all is denuded to absolute sterility. Below it a thousand enormous boulders have been brought down and thrown together by the fall. The passage across the torrent, among these rocks, is a curious specimen of Alpine bridge-building: poles and planks are placed from rock to rock, and almost under the spray of the cataract. Beyond it the road still ascends on the left bank of the Orco.

About 1 m. above Noasca is a gorge called the *Scalare di Ceresole*, where lofty precipices overhang the Orco, which tumbles in a succession of falls. The path for half a mile is cut out of the rocks, and a flight of steps (*Scalare*), practicable for mules, is carried up; sometimes on the brink of the precipice; at others, so deep in its side that a canopy overhangs it. Crosses fixed against the rock mark the spots of accidents.

This wild road terminates in a winding staircase, where it is difficult for a mule to turn, and at the top passes under the *Pietra Rossa*, a red

rock, which, according to the legend, blocked up the valley until a passage was opened by a blow of the hammer from one of the early Christian saints (*Santi Minatori*) who, according to local traditions, were sent by the Roman emperor to work in the quarries in this remote region. On emerging the traveller finds himself on a plain with fields of barley and an abundance of rich meadow-land. Immediately before him rise the snowy peaks of the *Levanna* (here called *Becca a Tre Corni*) and the range dividing the Val Grande from the Val d'Orco.

A little way within the plain of Ceresole the valley turns to the right and the Orco washes the base of a mountain, where the *Comte d'Aglie* has some silver-mines. The ore is smelted in the valley. Near the works there is a spring of water slightly ferruginous, but so highly carbonated that the gas escapes from it in a sparkling state; when drunk at the spring it is delicious. About 10 min. from the spring are the

*Baths of Ceresole*, 4864 ft., with a tolerably comfortable *Inn*, frequented by Turinese in the summer. This affords the best headquarters on this flank of the Grand Paradis. Pension 6 fr. 50 cents, G. Oberto and G. Bianchetti guides. The *Cascade* of Ceresole, near the Baths, deserves a visit.

*Excursion for a view of the Levanna, Grand Paradis, &c., to the Trucco della Ciarbonera*, 2½ hrs.; or 1½ hr. higher to the *Punta di Bella-Garda*.

[N. are 3 glacier passes, to Val Savaranche, of which the most easterly, the *Col du Mt. Corvè*, lies between the Paradis and Cima di Charforon. The most direct is the *Col du Grand Etret* (not Tetre), by which it is 8 hrs. to Pont in Val Savaranche. S. is a pass to the valley of the Stura, or Val Grande, by the *Col della Crocetta*, 9179 ft. The path (passable for mules) turns l. from the col, descending to *Ceres*, from which a carriage-road leads to Lanzo (Rte. 150, A). The ascent of the *Le-*

vanna is a tempting expedition for mountaineers. The *Grand Paradis* has also been reached from Ceresole.

The valley widens near (20 min.) the few and scattered houses of *Ceresole*, the highest of its villages, with a poor *Inn*, about 1 hr. above the Scalare.

[From Ceresole, the pass of the *Col de Galèse*, leading from the head of the Val d'Orco to the Val de Tignes, or upper valley of the Isère (Rte. 156), is first seen, above a snow-filled gully, called the Grand Colluret.

Above the hamlet of Chapis (where the only night-quarters are a hay-loft) 3 routes diverge—the Nivolet, N.E., to the Val d'Aosta, the Col del Carro, S.W., to the valley of the Arc and Mt. Cenis road, the Col de Galèse, N.W. That of the Galèse ascends a steep glen, and then crosses pastures to the *Châlets of Serue*: here milk and cheese may be had. Beyond Serue the scenery is singularly sterile and savage. A narrow path leads along the slope until it stops abruptly at a gully called the Petit Colluret. A zigzag path ascends this; above the plain of *Belotta* is attained. This is the bed of an ancient lake, now filled with a glacier, which streams down from the left. The glacier must be crossed by a very steep ascent to the Grand Colluret, rising at least 1500 ft. above the glacier. This is an extremely steep channel or *couloir*, partly filled with snow, and enclosed between precipitous rocks. Having climbed up close to the rocks, on the right, it is at last necessary to cross the snow itself that lies in the hollow. On the other side the footing is firm, and the traveller soon reaches the summit of the *Col de Galèse*, about 10,000 ft. above the sea, where one of the most glorious views in the Alps rewards him. The descent to the Val de Tignes is perfectly easy. It lies over a smooth glacier to the upper pastures. In about 1 hr. the path enters a gorge, and becomes exceedingly narrow. Emerging from this, the first *châlets* appear, and an easy descent over meadows leads to *Formil*, at the foot of the Col d'Iseran pass,

thence in half an hour to *Laval* (Rte. 156). About 8½ hrs. from Ceresole.

In the opposite direction the pass is less laborious, unless the snow of the Grand Colluret should be frozen hard, when step-cutting may be necessary. The Petit Colluret can be safely and quickly descended, though, from the looseness of the soil, the ascent by it is tiresome.

The traveller to the Val d'Aosta, who has given a day to the Col de Galèse, may sleep at the *châlets* of Serue, and from thence reach the Croix de Nivolet, without descending to Chapis, in 2 hrs.

The *Col di Carro* leads from Chapis to the wretched village of Bonneval, at the head of the valley of the Arc. Ascending S.W. by the *châlets* of Cenera, the track crosses the Orco near its source. The ascent continues across a glacier which lies on the N. side of the col. This is much broken up by crevasses, requiring caution and an experienced guide. In 1 hr. after reaching the glacier, the summit of the col, about 10,000 ft. is attained. In the descent, which is steep but not difficult, the source of the Arc is passed, and below it the hamlet of Ecot. Before reaching Bonneval (5½ hrs. from Chapis) the traveller passes an extraordinary scene of desolation called *Chapier de la Talenta*. It is said that the ancient site of Bonneval is here buried by the fall of a vast mass of mountain.]

#### COL DE NIVOLET.

There is a good royal mule-path over this pass.

Before reaching the point where the abrupt ascent to the Alp of Serue commences, a torrent is seen descending from the right. Up the left bank of this torrent the zigzag path of the Nivolet ascends, and at the end of 1½ hr. leads to some *châlets* even higher than those of Serue. The views of the high range of the Levanna are of the most sublime character. Above these *châ-*

lets the old path was a series of flights of steps rudely cut in the rock. Beyond this a scene of utter sterility is presented: numerous Alpine lakes or tarns are seen, but no prospect of escape, no way from this cul de sac seems to offer itself; yet in the most improbable of all directions there is one, which actually lies up and over the rugged and pinnacled crest of the boundary to the left, offering a path resembling that of the Gemmi. From the *Col de la Croix de Nivolet* (8624 ft.), the view is stern and imposing. The Levanna is a fine object beyond the head of Val d'Orco.

On looking on the other side of the col into the Plan de Nivolet, which is the head of the Val Savaranche, many lakes are also seen at the foot of the glaciers of the Nivolet, and directly across the Plan de Nivolet the *Col de Rosset* (about 9770 ft.), leading to the head of the Val de Rhêmes, and so, by a somewhat longer route, to Ville-neuve.

The descent to the Plan de Nivolet is short; and having attained the banks of the lakes, a nearly level path leads through the fine pasturages at the head of the Plan de Nivolet. Here Victor Emmanuel built a hunting-lodge, which in the last years of his life was one of his headquarters in the mountains.

In about an hour from the lakes the *Châlets de Nivolet* are reached, and here poor accommodation at high prices may be had (chez Dayné Alexis). Below these *châlets* the ground of the plain becomes boggy, and broken up into thousands of knolls, rounded by glacial action and covered with erratic blocks. At the end of another hour these are left, to descend by a path lying over bare and smooth granite, like that on the route of the Grimsel, above Handeck. After a considerable descent the traveller suddenly finds himself on the brink of a vast precipice, and overlooking the village of Pont, in the deep valley, a thousand feet below him. Here, on the edge of the precipice, a cross is placed, which is seen from below,

and called the *Croix d'Aroletta* 7451 ft. From it, one of those sublime scenes which occasionally reward the traveller in the Alps bursts upon him. The three vast peaks of the Grand Paradis, breaking through enormous glaciers, rise before him. The peaks S. of it are the *Cima di Charforon*, *Becca del Montandayne*; to the N. rise *L'Herbetet*, *Grand Serre*, and *Grirola*. The path winds among precipices for more than an hour to reach Pont, the highest village in the Val Savaranche, at a point where its two branches unite. On the descent a fine waterfall is passed.

Here the striking and peculiar scenery of this pass ends; the valley below Pont is narrow, clothed with pine-forest, and with very little cultivation at the bottom. On the l. a path leads by the *Col de Trélore* to the Val de Rhêmes; and on the rt. a royal path crosses to Cogne, by the *Col de Lauzon*, in 7 hrs. (Rte. 146). Near where the path to it quits the valley is the village of *Bien*, where a wealthy peasant will accommodate travellers; two good chasseurs and guides live here.

There are many little communes in this valley.

Before reaching Val Savaranche there is a picturesque spot, where two villages are perched opposite each other; here the mountains are seen which bound the valley of Aosta on the N. High on the hill-side to the l. is one of the hunting-boxes of the late king of Italy.

*Val Savaranche* or *Déjoux*, 4950 ft., is the principal village in the valley, and here refreshment may be obtained at a homely *Inn*, *Cantine de Nivolet*, but the sleeping-quarters are bad. The *curé*, however, reserves 4 rooms for travellers. Those who vary the route by crossing the ridge between this and the Val de Rhêmes may also find lodging at the *curé's* at the village of *Notre Dame de Rhêmes* (Rte. 147A).

On the W. side of the valley is a fine point of view called the *Pointe Blanche*,

commanding not only the Grand Paradis and Grivola, but Monte Rosa, the Matterhorn, and Mont Blanc. It is a walk of 4 hrs. to the top. Jean François Dayné, garde-chasse royal, knows the neighbouring mountains well.

The ascent of the *Grivola* from this side is very arduous, and only suited for practised mountaineers with good guides.

The *Grand Paradis*, on the contrary, is much more easy of approach than from *Cogne*, and is an ascent most strongly to be recommended to good walkers without much mountaineering experience, but provided with competent guides. The summit may be reached from *Pont* by a succession of snow-slopes in 6 hrs. The view is glorious and most extensive.

In the lower part of the valley the path continues at a great height above the river on its rt. bank; and, as it approaches the *Val d'Aosta*, commands a magnificent view of *Mont Blanc*, towering over the intermediate mountains. Here the *Val de Rhême* joins the *Val Savaranche*, and both enter the valley of *Aosta*. Seen from above, the end of the *Val de Rhêmes* appears like a table-land on the mountain side, studded with villages, rich in meadows and vines, walnut and chestnut trees.

From this elevation the paved descent to *Villeneuve* is rapid and fatiguing. At *Villeneuve*, however, there is no decent inn (food at the Post-office), and it is sometimes difficult to find a car for *Aosta* or *Courmayeur* (Rte. 134).

### ROUTE 147A.

AOSTA TO TIGNES, BY VAL DE RHÊMES  
AND THE COL DE LA GAILLETTA.

The *Val de Rhêmes*, uninteresting in its middle region, presents a magnificent crescent of glaciers at its head. From these rise the *Granta Parei* (first ascended by the *Gl. de Bassac*, and ice-slope on the N. side), the *Ste.*

*Hélène* and *Pte. de Culabre*. On the N. side of the *Granta Parei* (paroiss, a wall) lies the splendid pass of the *Col de Gailletta* to *Tignes*.

The path leading to *Val de Rhêmes* starts from *Villeneuve*. It mounts through a superb forest of walnuts, to *Introd*. Here there is a fine bridge over the torrent. The path now mounts by the l. bank to *St. George de Rhêmes*, 2 hrs., a poor hamlet. Above this the valley is narrow and sterile. It at last opens, and the village of

*Notre Dame de Rhêmes* is seen on a level meadow, backed by the snowy peaks at the head of the valley (wretched Inn, beds at the curé's), 4½ hrs. from *Villeneuve*.

*Col de Rosset*, see Rte. 147.

The scenery henceforth is very fine. The valley terminates in an icy cirque, dominated by the peak of the *Granta Parei* (which can be ascended from here). It is a walk of 2 hrs. from *Notre Dame* to the *Châlets of Suche*, at the foot of the *Gl. de Bassac*, the westernmost of those flowing into the valley. The way to the pass lies up the glacier, which offers no difficulties.

From the *Col de la Gailletta* (10,049 ft.) the view is superb, and is considered by excellent judges to rival some of the famous scenes in the Swiss Alps. The principal peaks of the *Cogne* and *Tarentaise Alps* are ranged round the traveller. The descent towards *Tignes* lies at first among crevasses. By keeping to the N. side of the glacier its more broken portion is avoided, and then a way is found down broken slopes and pasturages to the *Lac de la Sassiére*.

Below the lake a path crosses to the l. bank of the torrent, and descends rapidly to

*Tignes* (Rte. 156) which is reached in 8 to 9 hrs. from *Notre Dame*.

[There is also a longer pass, *Col de Rhêmes*, from the chalets of *La Suche* over the glaciers S. of the *Granta Parei* to the Alp of *Prariond*, at the N. foot of the *Col de Galèse*, 3 hrs. above *Tignes*.]

## ROUTE 148.

AOSTA TO BOURG ST. MAURICE, IN THE TARENTEISE, BY THE VAL GRISANCHE AND THE COL DU MONT.

The Val Grisanche runs along the E. side of the main chain of the Graian Alps. The chief summits on this line are the *Ruitor*, 11,460 ft., *Ornelune*, 10,771 ft., and *Aig. de la Sassièrè*, 12,323 ft. Between Val Grisanche and Val de Rhêmes is the *Invergnon*, about 12,000 ft., and at the head of these two valleys *Mont Bassac*, 11,200 ft., the *Granta Parei*, about 11,500 ft., the *Ste. Hélène*, 11,830 ft., and *Pte. de Calabre*, 11,034 ft.

The *Ornelune*, has 3 peaks, of which the lowest, on the E., was ascended by Mr. R. C. Nichols, 1865, from the path to the Col Vaudet.

The *Ruitor* is a broad glacier-covered mountain, with several summits. The N. peak may be ascended in a walk from L'Eglise to the little St. Bernard. (See Rte. 149.)

Aosta (Rte. 134).

Liverogne (Inn: Aux Voyageurs), 11 m. from Aosta. Hence to Bourg is about 13 hrs.

The entrance to the *Val Grisanche* by the torrent which flows into the *Val d'Aosta* is utterly impracticable. It is necessary to cross the stream by the new bridge, and immediately behind the little dirty town of Liverogne to pass a mill, and ascend through orchards and meadows which appear to lead away from the valley. At the head of these the path arrives abruptly below some rocks; thence turning and ascending along their base the traveller shortly finds himself in the path, which is carried high above the l. bank of the Grisanche.

The scenery here is of a striking character. The river runs so deep in the gorge as scarcely to be heard; and the rocks which bound its course are so nearly perpendicular, that the tops of lofty and enormous pines, rooted in the rifts below, can

[Switz.]

almost be touched by the hand of the traveller in passing above them. Overhanging the path, the mountains so close in, that the light of day does not half illuminate this deep and savage defile. On a sort of terrace, on the opposite bank, are seen the ruins of the feudal castle of *Montmayeur*, or *Tour d'Arboe*, frowning over the black ravine. From it, the view into the valley of Aosta must be beautiful, but what access there is to these ruins cannot be traced, or even imagined.

This narrow defile continues during an ascent of more than 2 hrs. Sometimes the path is carried on terraces, rudely formed of loose stones placed across rifts in the precipices; in others, the buttresses of rock are cut away to make room for the road.

The first village is *Revers*. The valley opens a little at the marshy plain of *Planaval*, where a village of the same name lies to the rt., in a lateral valley, by which the *Ruitor* can be ascended. A little further is *Serre* (H. Frassy; civil people), and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. beyond it *L'Eglise de Val Grisanche*, the principal place, with a small but tolerable Inn, *Au Cantine du Col du Mont*. It is situated at the foot of the *Becca de l'Aiguille* (aiguille), about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from Liverogne, and the passage to it from the *Val d'Aosta* comprises the most interesting scenery in the valley.

The sterility above l'Eglise is striking. The valley is strewn with enormous blocks which have been detached from the mountains, from whence still impending masses threaten the passing traveller, and numerous crosses record the frequency of fatal accidents. Deep rifts in the sides of the precipices are channels to cataracts which pour their white foam from the dark recesses; in some places the black precipitous slopes of the mountain are always wet and herbless, and reeking as if from some recent avalanche.

For more than two hours the same character of scenery prevails; some miserable hovels and a few fields of stunted barley are found in the bottom of the valley; on its sides there is only the dark precipice or black forest.

At *Fornet*, the highest village, the route to the Col du Mont ascends a steep path on the W. side by a torrent, and reaches some chalets on a small but fine pasturage. [Here it leaves to the rt. a second pass to Ste. Foi by the *Col du Lac*, on the shoulder of the Rutor, farther N. than the Col du Mont. This follows the stream upwards on its rt. bank, passing near the summit a small lake and a chapel dedicated to St. Grat. The distance is about the same, but the track is rougher and less frequented.] Above the chalets the path skirts the brink of precipices over a deep gorge, and enters a basin filled with rocks and stones brought down from the surrounding mountains, the summits of which are crested with glaciers. The ascent is steep and trackless for nearly 2 hrs., and up fatiguing slopes of snow. From the col, which lies immediately N. of the *Ornelune*, 10,833 ft., the view is very fine, not only of the deep valley of stones towards Piedmont, but of Mt. Pourri, and the more distant heights of Savoy, where nature presents a gentler aspect in the mountains which bound the Val d'Isère; the col is so narrow that both sides can be seen from the summit.

The *Col du Mont* (9120 ft.) was the scene of some desperate conflicts between the French and Piedmontese from the 4th to the 6th of May 1794. General Moulins, who commanded the former, after many efforts succeeded in gaining the position by advancing during a snow-storm, when such assailants were not expected, and retained it in spite of not less than ten efforts to repossess it. There are some remains of a fortification, and in 1868 the bones of 4 soldiers were found among the neighbouring rocks.

After passing down a steep path, leaving on the l. black precipices—the haunts of the chamois—the beautiful pasturages belonging to the commune of Ste. Foi appear in a deep basin, bounded below by a forest. In less than 2 hrs. the highest chalets in this basin are reached, and in another hour the *Châlets of Bonnet*, where the

track from the Col du Lac (see above) falls in on the rt. [From these chalets a path turning nearly due N. leads in 3 hrs. to the *Col de Tacqui*, or *Col de la Lys Blanche*, over which lies a difficult pass to La Thuile, on the road of the Little St. Bernard (Rte. 149). The descent lies over a portion of the great glacier of the Rutor.] Beyond Bonnet the road winds steeply down through a forest, and at length emerges to cross a torrent and enter the village of *Muraille*, where another bridge over a deep ravine leads to the hamlet of Mazure; thence traversing a brow on the mountain side, the road descends to

*Ste. Foi* in the Val de Tignes (*Inns*: H. du Mt. Blanc; Au Mt. Iseran; and 3 more). (Rte. 156.) The approach to it is strikingly fine, for the *Mont Pourri*, one of the most beautiful mountains in the Alps, bounds the opposite side of the valley. From its base in the torrent, far below the terrace where Ste. Foi stands, to its summit, a triangular pyramid of snow, the whole mountain is seen. At *La Thuile de Ste. Foi* (*Inn*: H. des Voyageurs), 2 m. S. of Ste. Foi, lives *François Ruet*, an excellent guide and sportsman. Chamois are not scarce, ptarmigan (albinos) are numerous; and the *coq de bruyère* is occasionally seen. There are excellent trout in the Isère, and the Lac de Tignes.

[From Ste. Foi there is a path by *Masures* on the Col du Mont, leading to the Little St. Bernard without going round by Seez, in a little over 3 hrs.]

From Ste. Foi the descent by a carriage-road is by zigzags to the banks of the Isère. Before reaching the river a torrent is crossed, which forms, in a lateral gorge, a fine cataract. It is difficult to get a view of it. This is the stream which from above descends between the villages of Mazure and Muraille.

From the bridge the road lies across meadows for some way, and on the banks of the Isère. Soon after, rising, it leads to the village of *Seez*, at the foot of the Little St. Bernard, 1½ m.

from Bourg. [From Scez to *Chapieux* (Rte. 139), under the Col du Bonhomme, is a walk of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. up the narrow Val de Bellaval, part of the way by an excellent carriage-road, not completed at the entrance, between Bourg and Bonneval.]

Beyond Scez is a bridge thrown over the Recluse. Here there is abundant evidence of the destructive character of this torrent after storms, in the sand, rocks, and stones which mark its course. Soon after the road passes some coarse woollen cloth-works, and forges for making small iron ware. Then across the winter bed of the furious Versoye, which descends from the N.E. by the Val de Bonneval, and below an old round tower belonging to the village of Châtelard. The road is wide and excellent, and in a 2 hrs.' walk from Ste. Foi leads to

*Bourg St. Maurice. Inn:* H. des Voyageurs, fair: good beds.

[The magnificent pass of the Col de Bassac (10,000 ft.) leads over the Glacier de Vaudet at the head of the Val Grisanche. Bearing to the N. this falls in at the summit with the Col de Guilletta (10,149 ft.) from the Val de Rhêmes. Turning rt. and crossing this col it descends due W. by the Gl. de Rhêmes, the *Lac de la Sassiére*, and under the black precipices of the Sassiére to Tignes. About 4 hrs. up from the Vaudet chalets; 3 hrs. down. A more direct but rather difficult passage, called the Col de la Sassiére (10,896 ft.), lies over the ridge between the Sassiére and Mt. Bassac to the Gl. de Rhêmes. From the chalets at the foot of the Vaudet Gl. tracks cross to La Thuile de Ste. Foi by the Col Vaudet, or Col du Clou, and from Fornet by the Col de la Finestra, between the Invergnun and Mt. Forchu, to the Val de Rhêmes. The A. de la Sassiére (12,323 ft.) is easily accessible for mountaineers from these chalets in 5 hrs. by the S.E. ridge.]

## ROUTE 149.

COURMAYEUR TO BOURG ST. MAURICE,  
BY THE LITTLE ST. BERNARD.

| Courmayeur.              | h. m.      |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Pré St. Didier . . . . . | 1 0        |
| La Thuile . . . . .      | 1 45       |
| Cantine . . . . .        | 2 0        |
| Hospice . . . . .        | 1 15       |
| Cantine . . . . .        | 0 30       |
| St. Germain . . . . .    | 1 10       |
| Scez . . . . .           | 1 0        |
| Bourg . . . . .          | 0 40       |
|                          | <hr/> 9 20 |

The above are the walking times by the old path. A char takes about 7 hrs. by the new road.

This is one of the easiest passes over the Alps, and one of the most ancient. It contests with the Petit Mont Cenis the honour of having been the scene of Hannibal's famous passage into Italy.

For pedestrians the old mule-track is shorter and more pleasant than the new road.

The road to the Little St. Bernard begins to ascend immediately behind Pré St. Didier by a series of steep zigzags, presenting striking views of the valley, and of Mont Blanc, especially from the mouth of the tunnel. On reaching level ground, overhanging the deep rift in the mountain through which the branch of the Doire from La Thuile bursts into the plain of St. Didier, the scene is particularly fine. The road is bordered by a pine-forest, of which some vast old trunks hang over the precipices, and help to conceal the deep torrent which roars beneath. It runs for some way along the l. bank of the stream through fine woods, continually ascending and descending till the village of La Balme is reached (1 hr. 10 min. from Pré St. Didier). Here the road crosses to the rt. bank and winds steeply upon the mountain side at a great height above the torrent; it being impracticable in the depth of the valley, which is here a ravine, to form even a path. There are occa-

sional peeps of the river, and one of particular interest, where in spring avalanches fall from the Cramont into the ravine, sometimes in such quantity that the snow remains, under the shadow of the mountain, unmelted for the year. This is the spot, in the opinion of some who have carefully examined into the subject, where Hannibal and his army found the way, by which they could have descended, destroyed, and his elephants and horses passed with difficulty over a bridge of snow. The road formerly lay on the l. bank of the river, but, since 1800, the present road has been made on the other side, high above all risk from avalanches. About  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from La Balme the road returns to the l. bank, and, the ravine being passed, the village of

*La Thuile* (Inn: H. de la Golletta, small) is reached, and the glaciers of Ruitor open upon the traveller.

[A short way above La Thuile the stream from the glacier of the Ruitor may be crossed, and a path taken to the valley of Aosta, by some beautiful pasturages, and through a forest overhanging the precipices above St. Didier, and from which the view of Mont Blanc is inferior only to that from the Cramont. After crossing the *Camp of Prince Thomas*, the path descends the steep mountain side on the rt. bank of the Doire.

From La Thuile a pleasant path, mounting through very picturesque forest scenery and past several waterfalls, leads to the alp of *Ste. Marguerite* and the great glacier of the Ruitor (3 $\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.). Near the chalets is a little tarn at the edge of the ice, in which icebergs frequently float, a smaller Märjelen See. After an ascent over rough ground, it is easy to enter on the great glacier, and to climb ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 hrs. from the alp) any of the summits of the *Ruitor* (11,460 ft.). From their position between Mt. Blanc and the great Graian group these command a superb view. The gaps between them serve as passes to mountaineers. Beginning on the E., the

*Col de Planaval* leads to the alp of

Planaval and the lower Val Grisanche.

The *Col de Ruitor*, the gap, E. of the highest summit, leads to *Bonc* in Val Grisanche in 7 hrs.; an hour more is required if the peak is ascended.

The *Col du Grand Assaly* leads S. of the peak of the Grand Assaly to *Ste. Foi*. The descent is by steep and difficult snow-slopes, where the axe is required.

There are two passes—the *Col de Tacqui* and the *Col du Grand Glacier*—from the lower part of the V. de Ruitor to the Tarentaise. Both are high, steep, and fit only for good walkers.

The road to the Little St. Bernard turns sharp to the rt. at the bridge of La Thuile, ascends rapidly to *Pont Serrant*—the last village—and, after crossing a very deep ravine and passing the village, becomes more steep, but presents little interest except to the geologist. At the top of the ascent is the *Cantine*, where refreshments can be obtained, and the road then enters on a fine pasturage on a plain about a league long and  $\frac{1}{2}$  a league wide, bounded l. by the Belvédère and Valézan, rt. by the Belleface, at the foot of which lies the little *Lac Vernet*. After passing the ruins of some defences thrown up during the war of the Revolution, when France and Sardinia struggled for possession of these summits, the road passes the highest point, 7420 ft., and the traveller sees before him, at the opposite extremity of the plain, the hospice rebuilt.

On the plain, however, are objects of high antiquity. A circle of stones on the most elevated point of the plain bears still the name of the *Cirque d'Annibal*. The stones are rude masses, varying in size, none very large; they are about 10 ft. apart, and the circle measures nearly 260 yds. round. The tradition is, that Hannibal here held a council of war. That he stayed on the summit of the Alps, and waited for his stragglers, is an historical fact.

Near the circle is a column standing, the *Colonne de Joux* (La Joux pro-

nounced Latzou), supposed to be of Celtic origin. It is nearly 20 ft. high, and 3 ft. in diameter. It is composed of Cipollino, a variety of marble which abounds on the Cramont. The frontier line of France and Italy passes along the crest of the pass. About 1½ m. from the Colonne de Joux is the

*Hospice*, 7123 ft. above the sea, at the S.W. extremity of the plain, close to a little lake. In one part of the building an ecclesiastic furnishes gratuitous hospitality to needy travellers; and the other part was in 1859 converted into a tolerably comfortable *Inn* (with a very civil landlord).

The Hospice was founded by St. Bernard of Menthon, but nothing of its history is preserved. The Great St. Bernard has absorbed all the interest, though, if the veil of the obscure history of the Little St. Bernard could be removed, it would perhaps surpass in early importance that of its great rival; for Celtic remains still exist here, and the foundations of a temple constructed of Roman brick are traced near the column. The present Hospice belongs to the Military and Religious Order of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus, and is dependent on the house at Aosta. One or 2 dogs are kept.

[It is easy to ascend the adjoining peaks of the *Valexan* (9446 ft.), or the *Belvédère* (8645 ft.). The latter is reached in 1 hr.; the former, more difficult, but commanding a finer view, in 1 hr. 40 min. Mont Blanc, which is not seen from the col of the Little St. Bernard, is from either summit a magnificent object. The view is of great extent, commanding the mountains far S. of the Tarentaise, and looking across to the glaciers of the Ruitor. The *Lancebranlette*, 3 hrs. N.W., commands a still finer prospect. A delightful day's excursion is to the cross on the *Col de la Forchetta*, just S. of Lac Vernet, and bearing to the rt. to visit the Vallon de Thuilette, Vallon des Glaciers, &c., under the Ruitor.

Travellers bound to the upper

valley of the Isère may shorten the way to Ste. Foi (Rte. 148) by ascending, nearly due S. from the hospice, the ridge of the Traversette, to which cannon were transported during the revolutionary war. The descent to Ste. Foi is rather steep, but this path saves nearly 2 hrs.]

The descent to Bourg St. Maurice begins immediately from the Hospice by a good carriage-road. By the old mule-path the distance is reduced more than one-half. At the *Cantine* refreshments can be obtained; the road soon after takes to the rt. bank of the stream, and continues over pasturages resembling those of the Col de Balme, till it descends steeply to the village of *St. Germain* (*Inn*, very poor).

Thence zigzags lead down to the village of *Scez*, at the foot of the pass, and at the entrance of the Val de Tignes. Beyond it is a bridge over the torrent called *La Recluse*, which is overhung at the point of passage by an enormous bank of gypsum, bearing the name of the *Rocher Blanche*. In situation it perfectly agrees with Polybius's account, in the passage of Hannibal, of such a rock, and the events which occurred there.

From the village of *Scez* 1½ m. of nearly level road to

*Bourg St. Maurice* — Berigentrum (*Inn*: H. des Voyageurs, passable, good beds). A poor town, rather prettily situated in a broad flat vale full of poplars, under the pine-forests of *Mt. Pourri*, and at the junction of several valleys. Its lofty campanile is a conspicuous landmark; and to the N., on a high point projecting from the mountain-side, is a chapel to St. Michael. Mules and side-saddles are to be found here, but scarce at times; to Courmayeur, 2-horse carriage 80 fr. Courier at 2 and 5 A.M., and omnibus at 2 P.M. in 4 hrs. to Moutiers, and thence to Albertville and Chamousset Stat. on Rly. to Chambéry. (Rte. 156).

To the Val de Tignes and Col d'Iseran. (Rte. 156).

To Chapieux and the Col de la Seigne by the Val de Bellaval (Rte. 139).

### ROUTE 150.

A. SALLANCHES TO ALBERTVILLE, BY  
UGINE, ST. MAXIME DE BEAUFORT.  
B. ANNECY TO BONNEVILLE; OR TO  
FLUMET BY THE COL DES ARAVIS.

9½ leagues.

From *Sallanches* (Rte. 138) a new route has been constructed, opening a carriage communication between the valley of the Arve and that of the Isère, in the Tarentaise. It is strongly recommended to travellers, as offering a succession of lovely scenes and views.

The road, which has been made or improved to Megève, rises directly up the steep side of one of the slopes of Mont Foron to the village of *Combloux*, about an hour's ascent. Its gay spire is seen from the road to Chamonix, near Passy, and also from the valley of Magland. From each zigzag in the ascent to Combloux there is a most beautiful prospect, well worth a walk from Sallanches or St. Martin. It commands the valley of Magland on one side, and the upper valley of the Arve on the other. The Aiguille de Varens rises with great grandeur in front of the spectator; and on the rt. of the upper Arve, the peaks and glaciers of Mont Blanc, and its extreme summit, are distinctly seen. Few spots for such a prospect can vie with the village of Combloux.

A little beyond Combloux the highest part of the road is passed. Thence the distance is a league, over a road nearly level, to

*Megève* (Inns: Soleil d'Or, excellent; Croix d'Or), 3700 ft. above the sea. From Megève a path leads over the ridge which divides the valley of the Arly from the valley of Haute Luce, by the Col de Véry, the shortest course to Beaufort.

[Megève is the place from whence the *Mont Joli* may be most easily ascended (3½ hrs. up or 5 hrs. walk going and returning) (Rte. 139). The summit (8760 ft.) is the finest point of view on the W. side of Mont Blanc. It may also be reached from Sallanches, St. Gervais, or Contamines. There is a footpath to St. Gervais, commanding splendid views all the way, which turns off from the road to Combloux about ¼ a mile from Megève.]

From Megève the road to UGINE descends the valley of the Arly in

2 hrs. to *Flumet* (Inn: Croix Blanche), a little town of Upper Faucigny, containing about 1000 Inhab., near the confluence of the Arondine and the Arly. On a rock are the ruins of a castle, in which the first baron of Faucigny resided.

[Hence the new road mounts N. to the Col des Aravis, see below.]

The valley of the Arly is a gorge, and bears the name of the Combe de Savoie. In 2 hrs. from Flumet it leads to

*Héry* (Inns: Cheval Blanc; Entrée des Voyageurs), a village beautifully situated, surrounded by high mountains covered with pine-forests.

Below Héry, the new road passes below the old path, in many places cut out of the mountain side above the deep bed of the Arly. Alternate spots of savageness and beauty are found throughout this valley. Its richness in walnut-trees is celebrated, and the oil which the nuts produce is an important article of commerce. A descent of about 6 m. leads to

*Ugine* (Inn: Grande Maison), a large ill-built town, containing 3000 Inhab., famous for its fairs of cattle and mules. To the N., on a steep limestone rock, are remains of the Castle, attacked in the 9th century by the Saracens, and destroyed in the 13th by Humbert, first dauphin of Vienne. The town is situated on the rt. bank of the Arly, on the road between Annecy and Aiguebelle (Rte. 152), at the foot of *Mont Charrin*, which rises due N. 7920 ft. above the sea.

From Ugine an excellent carriage-road runs down 5 m. to Albertville, through a deep and rich valley. On the other side of the Arly is seen the valley of Beaufort, and the Doron, which flows through it.

*Albertville*—a name given, 1835, in compliment to the late king of Sardinia, Charles Albert; previously called *L'Hôpital*. (*Inns*: H. de la Balance, poor and dear; Etoile du Nord). Albertville, with its wide and clean streets, gay shops, and linden-tree avenues, is one of the nicest little towns in Savoy; it has about 1500 Inhab., and lying on the high road, by which communication is held with Ugine, Annecy, and Sallanches, with Chambéry, and with Moutiers Tarentaise, it has, since the establishment of good roads, been increasing in importance. It has several handsome public buildings—the *Préfecture*, with garden and fountain; *Maison de Ville*; *Palais de Justice*, &c. *Diligences* by Faverges to Annecy and Sallanches—to Moutiers 27 kilos, to Chamousset Stat. on Rly. to Chambéry and Mont Cenis in 3 hrs., fare 2½ fr. 1-horse carriage to Chamousset, 8 fr. Railroad in construction.

On the other side of the broad bed of the Arly, which is crossed by a handsome stone bridge, rise the ivy-clad ramparts of the old-fashioned and picturesque town of

*Conflans*, with about 1300 Inhab. It was formerly defended by 2 very strong forts, and resisted the troops of Francis I. in the war of 1536, when it was partly burnt, and its two forts demolished. It has one or two curious old buildings, and from its *Promenade* on the rampart, a 20 min. walk, a glorious view down the valley of the Isère (which receives the Arly a little below), towards the Grande Chartreuse mountains. The *church*, which contains a curious wooden pulpit, commands a still finer prospect from the top of the tower. The valley of the Isère turns at a rt. angle, and is seen on two sides in long perspective—broad and poplar-covered towards Chamousset, but shut in to-

wards Moutiers. The great variety in the forms of the surrounding mountains, vine-clad on their lower slopes, will be noticed from the bridge. On the banks of the river is a smelting-house, *Fonderie Royale*, where the silver, from the ore raised in the neighbourhood, is reduced.

[Every visitor to Albertville should make an excursion to the valley of Beaufort, or a pedestrian may take it on his road to Chamonix, Courmayeur or Bourg St. Maurice. The point to be attained is the principal village,

*St. Maxime de Beaufort* (*Inns*: Cheval Blanc, chez La Croix; very fair and cheap; Croix d'Or; Au Mt. Blanc), 11½ m., a drive of 3 hrs. 1-horse courier, holding 3 travellers, 2 P.M., fare, 2 fr. 50 cent. There is an excellent carriage-road. The narrow old road, with its ups and downs and twists on steep slopes, was scarcely safe for a carriage.

Ascending from Albertville through a grove of Spanish chestnuts, the road quickly enters a beautifully wooded narrow valley, winding between the *Bisane*, N., *Mirantin*, S. It is quite a road to walk. On the descent to Beaufort the view is charming. To the l. is the opening of the valley of Haute Luce, with ruins of two old towers, and in front wooded buttresses, like side-scenes, one behind the other. There is a château to the rt., and the mountains are green with pines. The valley seems to end at Beaufort, but it is continued through a remarkable gorge.

Beaufort itself is picturesque, with 2 old mossy bridges on the clear and rapid torrent, and several cheerful châteaux. It is beautifully situated, deep among the mountains, at the junction of 2 valleys with that of the Doron, which above this point is called the *Val de la Gîte* (or *Gitta*). The *Val de Haute Luce* falls into it from the N., the *Val Pouvillanot* from the S. By the former, up which a carriage-road runs for 5 m., as far as Haute Luce, Contamines

is reached in 8 hrs. by the *Col Joli*; or the chalet *Inn* of La Barne by the *Enclave de la Fenêtre*. By the latter are 3 passes to Moutiers, in the valley of the Isère, *Col de la Bâthie*, S.W. (first turning rt., opposite Arèche), in about 8 hrs.; *Col de la Lauze* and *Col du Cornet*, far finer passes, S.W. and S.E. from the head of the valley, in about 11 hrs. (3 along the high-road).

About 2 m. above Beaufort the valleys of Treicol and Roselein, from the W. and N. sides of the *Aig. du Gid. Fowl*, join that of the Gite from the S. By the former is a pass falling into the Cormet rte.; by the latter one called *Col de la Lai* or *de la Croix* to Chapioux.

At the head of the Val de la Gite is the *Col de la Sauce*, opening on the Col du Bonhomme, and at the head of its N. branch a second *Col de Fenêtre*, leading to the little inn of La Barne lower down the Bonhomme.

Just above Beaufort, in a deep recess, is the entrance to the romantic gorge of the Gite, barely allowing space for the free passage of the torrent. In  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. it expands, and, crossing to the l. bank, the path ascends through a beautiful opening, and then dense pine-forest to some chalets and a wider basin (1 hr.) to which 3 streams descend. Here the opening of *Val Treicol*, joined to the l. by the glen of *Roselein* leading to Chapioux, is passed on the rt. The Doron falls to the basin from the E. through a steep ravine, and the path in that direction, first crossing the main stream, mounts a forest in zigzags. At the top is a wild glen, and then a broad upland valley of pasture (1 hr.) surrounded by the mountain tops. The *Col de la Sauce* is straight ahead; the *Fenêtre* to the l. The mule-path towards the latter ends ( $\frac{3}{4}$  hr.) at the chalets and little chapel of *La Gite*, and the track is ill-marked up pastures to the col (1.50)—about 5 hrs. from Beaufort. The ridge is crowned by fantastic rocks, and a steep slope of débris and a green alp lead down the other side to the inn of the *Chalet à la Barne*,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from Contamines.

Between the Doron and Dorinet of the Val de Haute Luce rise the *Rochers des Enclaves*—a curious granite group arranged round an oval basin, so shut in by the granitic ridge that the waters from it are discharged through subterranean channels, or over numerous fine falls into the valley of La Gite. N. of it is the little *Lac de la Girottaz*, and in the centre of the basin are the chalets of Putray.]

**B. Annecy to Bonneville, or to Flumet by the Col des Aravis.**

Good roads, little known to English travellers, lead direct from Annecy through the lower mountains of Savoy to the valley of the Arve, passing through charming pastoral scenery and affording pleasant variations on the frequented approach to Chamonix by Geneva.

*St. Clair*, 5 m. from Annecy. Near here are remains of an old Roman road, and in the face of the Parmelan 3 of the curious caves in which ice remains unmelted throughout the summer, known as *Glacières*.  $6\frac{1}{2}$  m. further is

*Thones* (H. de la Couronne, fair), picturesquely situated, 2054 ft. The neighbouring summits of the *Townette*, 7710 ft. (5 hrs.) and *Grand Chervin*, 7897 ft. ( $6\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.), command fine views.  $5\frac{1}{2}$  m. beyond Thones the village of *St. Jean de Sixt* is reached. 3202 ft. This stands on the watershed. The road to Bonneville now descends the course of the Borne. The road soon reaches the river, and passes with it through a fine defile before reaching, 3 m.

*Entremont* (Inn: Aux Trois Piétons). Hence a pleasant drive of 10 m. passing *Le Cret*, the largest village of the valley, and crossing a brow commanding a fine view of the valley of the Arve leads to

*Bonneville* (see Rte. 138), 30 m. from Annecy.

[The road to Sallanches leaves that described above at *St. Jean de Sixt*, and follows the Nom. southwards to a gap in the long *Chaine des Aravis*.

*La Clusaz*, 3 m., carries on a large timber trade.

The *Col des Aravis* (4928 ft.), 5 m., is a plain some 1½ m. long, commanding a superb view of Mont Blanc. The descent to *Flumet* (see above) 8 m. by the new road passing *La Giettaz*, is picturesque.]

### ROUTE 151.

GENEVA TO CHAMBÉRY, BY AIX LES BAINS. (RAILWAY.)

| Geneva.               | Eng. m. |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Culoz . . . . .       | 42      |
| Aix les Bains . . . . | 54      |
| Chambéry . . . . .    | 64      |

From Geneva to Culoz Stat. (good buffet), see Rte. 53.

At Culoz Stat. the Lyons and Geneva line of rly. is left, and that of *Victor Emmanuel* taken. This crosses the Rhone by a fine iron girder-bridge, traverses marshy meadows and rich corn-fields, and in a short while reaches

*Châtillon Stat.*, near which is the ruined Castle on a rock, commanding a splendid view of the *Lac du Bourget*. After some remarkable pieces of railway engineering, the line reaches the E. shore of the lake. The views over the lake, of the convent of Haute Combe, and, further up, of the pointed *Dent du Chat*, with a fine range of mountains beyond, are very beautiful. After passing through four tunnels, we reach

*Aix les Bains Stat.*, 14 hrs. from Paris. (850 ft.)

(Inns: H. de l'Europe; Grand H. d'Aix; H. Venat, with a garden; H. de l'Univers et des Ambassadeurs Réunis, —all very good; H. La Place; H. du Parc; H. Guillard or Poste; H. Robin; H. Folliet; H. de l'Arc Romain; H. des Bains; H. Victoria; and others. These hotels are all closed during winter except H. de l'Europe.) There are numerous boarding-houses and lodgings. Carriages 3 fr. an hour, and tariff for horses and boats.

This watering-place, situated 1½ m. to the E. of the pretty *Lac du Bourget*, and containing 4430 Inhab., was known to the Romans as *Aquæ Gratianæ*, and is still resorted to on account of its mineral springs, and of the attractions of the beautiful country round it, by some 16,000 visitors yearly, many coming from Lyons, and more for amusement than for the baths.

Its *Mineral Springs* are warm and sulphureous. They issue from two sources near to each other, but at different levels. One, the *Sulphur Spring*, is of the temperature 113° Fahr., and yields about 341 gallons per minute, and the other, the *Alum Spring* (incorrectly so called, as it contains no alum), is 116°, and yields about 735 gallons per minute, and contains more iron and calcareous carbonate as well as sulphate of alumina.

The sulphur spring is drunk at the source, and is good for chronic rheumatism and gout, cutaneous diseases and derangement of the digestive organs. These waters, however, are chiefly employed for baths, —and above all for douche baths. There is a very handsome and well-arranged Thermal establishment; it was built by a former king of Sardinia, and was greatly enlarged and furnished with the newest appliances in 1860 by the grant of a large sum from Napoleon III.

The hot water is conveyed into the establishment and applied for douches at a pressure varying from 10 to 60 feet. The bathing is regulated by a chef de service, under whom are six surveillants, 32 male and female doucheurs and frotteurs, 30 porters for carrying patients in sedan chairs from the baths to their hotels. The baths are open all winter, but the season commences on the 15th May.

*Physicians.* — M. Grandthoranne, Director of the baths; Physician and Inspector, M. Vidal; MM. Brachet, Macé, Davat, Guillard, Bertier, &c. There is stated to be a preposterous custom, by which the physicians expect to receive a tenth of the total

expenses of the traveller while at Aix (see Joanne's 'Alpes Françaises'). English travellers will, therefore, do well to ascertain beforehand what liabilities they incur by taking local medical advice. There is a regular code of laws as to the baths, and there are two fine swimming-baths.

Balls are frequently given during the season in the *Casino*, where there is also a reading-room and restaurant. There is a small *English Church*; service is performed during the season only. There are several practical local handbooks. 'Aix les Bains Marlioz et leurs Environs,' Hachette, Paris, 1876, is recommended.

There are several interesting *Roman Remains*; a sepulchral arch in debased Doric style, probably of the 3rd or 4th centuries, raised by Lucius Pompeius Campanus to the memory of his family; a portion of an Ionic temple of Diana, built of large blocks of calcareous stone, of which the cella is perfect, is incorporated in the remains of the *Château* of the Marquises of Aix, a building of the 16th century. The *Roman Baths* are entered from Madame Chabert's garden. The principal portion visible is an hypocaust. The vaulting is a most perfect piece of construction, well worthy of attention.

The *Thermal Caverns* of St. Paul (tickets, 50 c.), reached by a subterranean gallery, are curious, and contain large stalactites.

About  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. distant on the Chambéry road is Marlioz, neatly laid out grounds with mineral springs and inhaling rooms, sometimes used as an adjunct to the Aix waters. The geology of the district is the Neocomian strata of the cretaceous group overlying the Jurassic formation.

*Branch Railway* from Aix to Anancy (Rte. 152) in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. by Albens, Rumilly, then up the romantic valley of the Fier by Lovagny, where the Gorge du Fier (Rte. 152) is well worth visiting.

*Excursions.*—There are numerous

rides and walks in the neighbourhood, through varied and beautiful scenery. The nearest are to the villages of Tresserve, Mouxy, St. Innocent, the castles of Bordeaux, Bonport, and Châtillon on the borders of the lake.

*Grésy*,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  m. distant. Old tower at the village and waterfalls, five minutes from the Rly. Stat. Here the stream flows through deep chasms in the rock, overgrown with verdure, and picturesque old saw-mills. In 1813 the Baroness de Broc, a young lady in attendance on Queen Hortense, unfortunately perished by slipping from a plank into the pool below. The spot is marked by a monument and inscription.

*Haute Combe*, on the opposite or N.W. shore of the *Lac du Bourget*. Boat 8 fr., with two boatmen, including return. A small steamer plies during the summer.

This monastery, situated below the Mont du Chat, and slightly raised above the lake, was founded by St. Bernard in 1125. It was the burying-place of the Princes of Savoy, Canons of Cîteaux, and others, among whom are Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, son of Count Thomas of Savoy, who died 1270; Amadeus V., VI., and VII.; Jeanne de Montfort and her husband; Peter of Savoy; Anne of Zähringen, &c. The convent, erected 1743, was pillaged and desecrated and the ch. rifled and destroyed during the French revolution. About the year 1824 it was entirely rebuilt in florid but debased Gothic by Charles Felix, King of Sardinia. The monuments are numerous, all, however, modern, or so much restored as to leave little of the original. The convent is again occupied by Cistercian monks.

Near Haute Combe is a tower, called *Phare de Gessens*, the view from which is described by Rousseau. About  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. beyond the Abbey is an intermittent spring, called *Fontaine des Merveilles*.

*Lac du Bourget*. About 12 m. in length by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. in breadth. Its level is 741 ft. above the sea, 105 ft. below

the Aix Baths, and 498 ft. below the Lake of Geneva; its waters find their exit into the Rhone from its northern end. It is stated to be in some places 500 ft. deep. The boats both on this lake and that of Annecy are very good, and superior to those on the Swiss lakes—the men row well, and understand sailing. The charges are regulated by a tariff of 3 fr. the hour. A steamer makes the tour of the lake in summer. The fishing is excellent, and travellers can secure good sport. The W. margin of the lake consists of a tall precipice of limestone, rising almost perpendicularly from the water's edge, and extending from Haute Combe to Bourdeau. A pleasant way of seeing the scenery of the lake, for a good pedestrian, is by taking a boat to Haute Combe, sending it on to Bourdeau, and walking by agreeable by-paths along the heights above the lake, descending to Bourdeau by the main road over the Mont du Chat.

For those who enjoy mountain ascents an interesting excursion may be made from Aix to the summit or slopes of the *Dent du Chat*, the highest point in the range of limestone mountains, the W. boundary of the lake.

The shortest way is to cross the lake from Aix to Bourdeau on the high road from Chambéry to Lyons by Yenne. The road ascends the side of the mountain, winding along steep slopes which command admirable views over the lake, until it attains the pass of the *Mont du Chat*, 2070 ft. above the sea. This is one of the most ancient passages from France into Italy, and was probably the most frequented before the construction of the road by Les Échelles (Rte. 153).

On the summit of the pass there is a level, about 300 yds. across, covered with stones, rocks, and brushwood. A temple formerly stood here, of which the foundations may be traced, and many of the stones around made part of the building. They have been well cut, and the cornices of many are yet tolerably perfect. An inscription found here has given rise

to the idea that the temple was dedicated to Mercury, or more probably to his Gallic equivalent the God Theut, who, like him, presided over highways. The mountain was called Mons Thuates, probably from this temple.

Even without ascending to the top of the mountain, the view from the slope is very fine. Looking towards France, the scene is most fertile, studded with villages and towns, and so extensive that where the distant mountains of Tarare do not limit the horizon, it subsides into indistinctness.

Immediately below, on the same side, are the rich pasturages of the W. slopes of the Mont du Chat. Beyond these are the valley of the Rhone, and the hills and plains which extend to the Ain. To reach the highest point, called the *Dent du Chat*, descend the road towards Yenne for a  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr., then take a path to the l., which leads in 20 min. to a small Inn. From thence along the ridge overlooking the Col, and ascending the E. side of the *Dent* to the top is a scramble of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr., or 3 hrs. from Bourdeau. An inexperienced person should take a guide.

From the summit, 5302 ft. above the sea, the view on the eastern side is one of surpassing beauty. The mountain appears to overhang the lake, into whose deep blue waters it seems only a leap. Beyond is the valley of Chambéry, extending to the *Mont Granier*, 6348 ft.; Aix les Bains is at your feet, and on the rt. Chambéry lies like a model; numerous hamlets speckle the beautiful valley, which is bounded on the opposite side by the rich slopes of the *Mont d'Azé*, and the *Dent de Nivolet*, 4597 ft.; far beyond are seen the mountains of the Val d'Isère, and the snowy summits of the Dauphiné Alps.

At the S. extremity of the lake are the ruins of the *Castle of Bourget*, the residence of the ancient Counts of Savoy, down to the time of Amadeus V. called the Great, who was born here in 1249. He sent for the painter Giorgio di Aquila, a pupil of Giotto,

to decorate its interior; and some fragments of fresco, now nearly effaced, in a cabinet formed in the thickness of the wall of one of the towers, are probably a part of his work.

Aix and the Lac du Bourget are sketched by Lamartine, not very correctly, in his story of 'Raphael.'

N.B. Those who approach Chamoin by Aix, and do not wish to go round by Geneva, may cross from Annecy, now connected with Aix by Rly. (see Rte. 152) to Bonneville or Sallanches. The roads are excellent, and there are diligences from Annecy (Rte. 150).

Soon after leaving the Aix station, the Marlioz Etablissement is seen on the l., whilst on the rt. is the wooded bank of Tresserve. Beyond it another peep of the lake is caught. The line then runs through flat meadows to

#### CHAMBÉRY STAT.

*Chambéry* (885 ft.) (Ital. *Ciamberi*) (*Inns*: H. de France, good and reasonable; H. de l'Europe, good; H. des Princes; Métropole; H. de la Paix, near the stat.; Poste, old, dirty, and bad), once the capital of the House of Savoy, now Chef lieu du Dépt. and an archbishop's see, containing about 20,000 Inhab., and pleasantly situated within a circle of mountains. The streets are rather picturesque, and have an air of activity, although the population remains stationary, and the town contains little to interest the traveller. A peculiar silk-gauze is made here, and the manufactory, at a pretty château called *La Culinine*, is shown to strangers.

The *Cathedral*, a Gothic building (14th century, finished 1430), curiously painted in imitation of the stone tracery of the 15th century, is neither large nor interesting.

By flights of sloped terraces you may ascend to the *Castle* of the Dukes of Savoy, an ancient fragment, presenting a very picturesque and imposing appearance. It was burnt in 1798, only 3 of the towers, the chapel,

and the part next the town escaping. The chapel (begun 1415) is in the style of the Sainte Chapelle at Paris, and has some beautiful lancet windows of painted glass. The interior is painted in imitation of Flamboyant tracery. One side of the castle-yard is occupied by a singularly ugly modern building, now residence of the Préfet, within which are the very simple apartments formerly occupied by the Sardinian Royal Family. A singular and stately staircase leads up one of the towers. From the top there is a noble view.

Before the French revolution there were 20 convents in Chambéry: there are still seven, four of which are nunneries.

Among the most conspicuous buildings are the modern *Palais de Justice*, *H. de Ville* (1864), and *Three Barracks*. In the Palais de Justice is a collection of objects found in lake-dwellings.

There is a *Public Library* containing 13,000 volumes, an incipient museum, and a few pictures, none of them calculated to afford the stranger much gratification; there is also a *Theatre* and a *Royal College*.

*St. Réul*, author of the 'Conjuraton contre Venise,' was born at Chambéry, 1639; and the *Comte Xavier de Maistre*, author of the 'Voyage autour de ma Chambre,' is also a native. This town boasts among her citizens *General de Boigne*, who, having made an immense fortune in the East Indies, in the service of the Rajah Scindia, bestowed the greater portion of it, to the amount of 3,417,850 fr., in benefactions to his native place. He founded two hospitals, and set on foot many improvements. A street has been named after him, and in it a *monument*, consisting of a fountain ornamented with figures of elephants, has been erected to his memory. He died 1830.

On a rock rising on the rt. bank of the *Leyssé*, a Roman site, stands the *Ch. of Lémenc*, the oldest in the district. In the crypt is the tomb of an Irish bishop.

About 20 minutes' walk to the south

of the town is *Les Charmettes*, the residence of *Rousseau* and of his friend Madame de Warens. There is nothing in the place at present worth notice independently of its connection with J. Jacques: the house has the appearance of a poor farm-house. Rousseau's room was the one over the entrance.

Those who desire a pleasant two hours' walk, may visit the ravine called *Le Bout du Monde*. The road to it turns out of that to Turin at the end of the Faubourg de Montmélian, follows the left bank of the Leysse by the side of the great dyke, as far as the village of Leysse, where it crosses the stream, and, passing on the right the picturesque castle of Chaffardon, enters the gorge of the Doriat, which is closed in on all sides by high cliffs, forming the base of the Dent de Nivolet, and has no outlet. Behind a paper-mill, built by one of the Montgolfiers, the stream falls in a pretty cascade over the wall of rock here formed of remarkably regular and thin horizontal strata, through some of which the water forcing its way forms supplementary jets at a distance from the main fall.

About 3 m. E. of Chambéry lies *Challes*, the source of a mineral water remarkable for its strength in sulphur, and also containing iodine and bromine; it is largely used in the treatment at Aix-les-Bains.

The *Dent de Nivolet*, 4597 ft., one of the highest of the Beauges mountains, may be ascended on the E. side from Désert. The top may be reached in 4 hrs. on mules from Chambéry. There is a cross on the summit, which is plainly seen from Chambéry. Another delightful ascent is that of *Mont Granier*, 6348 ft., with curious chasms on its limestone summit. To the S. of it are the *Abîmes de Myans*, noticed in Rte. 154.

## ROUTE 152.

GENEVA BY ANNECY TO AIGUEBELLE,  
ON THE MONT CENIS ROAD.

112 kil. = 70 Eng. m.

| Geneva.           | Kil. | Eng. m. |
|-------------------|------|---------|
| St. Julien . . .  | 10   | = 6     |
| Crusilles . . .   | 16   | = 10    |
| Anncy . . .       | 17   | = 11    |
| Faverges . . .    | 25   | = 16    |
| Albertville . . . | 20   | = 12    |
| Aiguebelle . . .  | 24   | = 15    |

Two diligences by day in 4 hrs., and one by night in 6 hrs., to Annecy.

Since the completion of the rly. from Geneva to Chambéry, and from thence to St. Jean de Maurienne, this road has been little frequented. But those who are not pressed for time, and who wish to see a beautiful part of Savoy, may still find it an interesting route from Geneva to the Mont Cenis or Little St. Bernard.

On leaving Geneva the road passes through Plain Palais, crosses the Arve, and continues through Carouge and the richly cultivated plain of the Arve, until it rises to the village of

*St. Julien*, on the frontier of Savoy. An extra horse is required this stage.

The road ascends a long hill to *Mont Sion*, a ridge running nearly at right angles with the Mont Saleve. From its height—more than 3300 ft. above the sea—the views of the Lake of Geneva, Jura, and deep valley of the Rhone flowing into France, form a fine panorama. The course of the road is generally high, though it undulates, to

*Crusilles*, a little town of 1300 Inhab., with the ruins of a castle, and a dirty Inn. Beyond it the road crosses the stream of Les Ussets, sunk in a defile, by the

*Pont de la Cuille*, a wire suspension-bridge, erected by the Sardinian Government to carry the road directly across and on a level, and thus avoid the détours of the old road, which may be still seen winding in the depths below. The length is 636 ft., and height above the river 656 ft. It is also called the *Pont Charles Albert*, and

was opened Sept. 1839. It is probably the loftiest suspension-bridge in the world. A toll of 50 sous is paid for two horses, and 60 sous for a larger number.

The drive is pleasant by the villages of Alonzier, Caval, Pringy, and Metz, through a hilly country, often presenting fine points of view; at length the road crosses the Mont des Bornes, and descends a hill which overlooks the plain and lake of Annecy, and the fine mountain scenery which surrounds them. There is a singular beauty and a charm in this approach to Annecy which is likely to be long remembered. At the Pont de Brogny the river Fier, which falls into the Rhone at Seyssel, is crossed, and in half an hour the traveller finds himself at

*Annecy* (Inns: H. Verdun, good and moderate; H. d'Angleterre good. A fine cheese is made in the mountains). This industrious city of 11,600 Inhab. is situated at the N. extremity of the Lake of Annecy, which is discharged by canals crossing the streets. The town is picturesque and clean, the shops in many of its streets are under arcades, and there is an air of respectable antiquity about it—though this, the ancient capital of the Counts of Geneva, succeeded a still older one. In the 12th century it was known as *Anneciæcum novum*, to distinguish it from *Anneciæcum vetus*, which formerly existed on the slopes of the beautiful hill of Annecy-le-vieux. Numerous medals of the Roman emperors of the two first centuries of the Christian era have been found here, and inscriptions, sepulchres, urns, and fragments of statues, and of a temple, attest the presence of the conquering people.

When the house of Geneva became extinct, Annecy passed to that of Savoy. In 1412 it was totally burnt. To assist in restoring the inhabitants to their town, Amadeus VIII., duke of Savoy, gave them many privileges, and enabled them to establish works for flax-spinning, which has continued to be its principal manufacture.

The linen bleacheries, which date from 1650, have always sustained a high reputation, and are still flourishing. Encouraged by Napoleon, the late Baron Dupont, of Turin, introduced the first cotton-works. There are also manufactories of black glass, sulphuric acid, printed cottons, &c., and in the neighbourhood a vein of lignite is worked, at Entrevernes,—and at the village of Crans are oil, corn, and fulling mills on the Fier.

The ancient *Château*, the residence of the family of Genevois-Nemours, is now a barrack; in the Queen's tower are the oubliettes, torture-chamber, and furnace for heating the instruments of torture.

The *Cathedral* has a 'St. Peter and the Angel' by Mazzola di Valdnggia. In the neighbouring *Ch. of St. François* are deposited the remains of St. François de Sales, and of the Mère (Sainte) Chantal. Their translation from the Cathedral was made in 1826, with great ceremony.

"The tender friendship that long subsisted between St. Francis de Sales and La Mère Chantal, has given to their memory and relics, with pious Catholics, a degree of interest similar to that excited by the remains of Abélard and Eloïse.

"St. Francis de Sales was descended from the noble family of de Sales in Savoy; he was born in 1567. Having devoted himself to the Church, and evinced great zeal and eloquence in its defence, he was ordained prince and bishop of Geneva by Pope Clement VIII., for the popes assumed the right to confer these titles long after the Reformed religion had been established at Geneva, Annecy being made a bishop's seat when the Genevese expelled the chapter from their city. St. Francis de Sales died at Lyons in 1622, and was buried at Annecy. His canonisation took place in 1665: but before that event his remains were so highly valued by the inhabitants, that, when the city was taken by the French in 1630, one of the six articles of capitulation stipulated that the body of the venerable Francis de Sales should never be re-

moved from the city."—*Bakewell's Tour in the Tarentaise.*

The *Museum and Library* (12,000 vols.) are in the *Hôtel de Ville*. The former contains Roman and other antiquities, mineral, and nat. hist. collections, including 200 species of birds killed in Savoy. Here also are the remains of Dr. Hamel's guides, lost on Mt. Blanc in 1820. In the adjoining Public Garden is a statue of *Berthollet*, the chemist, by *Marochetti*.

The *Préfecture* is in the style of Louis XIII. The town has a *Theatre*, and a *Haras*, or horse-breeding estab., founded by Napoleon in 1806.

Rousseau, on escaping from Geneva, fled to Annecy, and many passages of the Confessions relate to his residence here.

The *Promenade du Pâquier* is a beautiful *Avenue* where fairs and public amusements are held.

The charming *Lake of Annecy* is 1463 ft. above the sea; it abounds in fish—the lotte, and one peculiar to this lake, the *caïron*. A steamer makes the tour of it daily in 3 hrs. Restaurant on board. To the E. of it is the limestone mountain *La Tournette*; N.E. *Mt. Parmelan*; W. *Le Semnoz*.

Opposite Annecy, on Mt. Veyrier, are the houses once occupied by *Rousseau* and *Eugène Sue*. Further on the E. shore stands *Menthon-les-Bains*, with a sulphureous spring, and remains of Roman baths, and in an opening of the mountains, the *Château de Menthon*, in feudal times the residence of a powerful family. Here *St. Bernard*, the "Apostle of the Alps," was born, and the place of his nativity, independent of its local beauty, cannot fail to interest the traveller.

The *Roche de Chères* separates Menthon from Talloires (H. de l'Abbaye), the birthplace of *Berthollet* the chemist, in 1748. A little cove reflects the image of the *Tournette*, and a chestnut avenue leads a stranger to the ancient abbey (now an hotel). One of its old monks—*St. Germain*—retired up the mountain-side to a deeper solitude, and his *hermitage* on the edge of a chasm is well worth a visit. Nearly opposite Talloires is

*Château Duing*, crowning a headland, and near it a more ancient ruined tower, and another château called *de Herée*.

The *Gorge du Fier*, 10 min. from Lovagny Stat. ( $\frac{1}{4}$  hr.) on the Aix line, is a curious scene. The torrent Fier rushes through a limestone fissure, in which a gallery has been constructed for 300 yds., and is to be carried farther. Admittance 1 fr., paid at a refreshment chalet which commands a good view of the *Château de Montrotier*. The gallery is fixed midway on the cliff, about 50 ft. above the stream, and as far below the festoons of clematis and ivy, which form garlands overhead. The chasm is spanned by an old Roman bridge, and modern rly. bridge, and terminates in another curiosity, a broad indented surface of rock, below which, on close inspection, the river may be detected silently streaming through a network of channels and holes, similar to those of the Perte du Rhône at Bellegarde. The walk may be extended over the Roman bridge to the *Château de Montrotier*, said to date from the 14th cent., but partly modernised. Beautiful view from its terrace, and at the bottom of a tower one of those dreadful oubliettes so common in foreign strongholds.

The establishment at Crans, of the hydraulic machines for the drainage of the lake, is deserving of a visit.

Ascent of the *Tournette*, 7710 ft., from Talloires; of the *Semnoz*, 5572 ft., 6 hrs. to the top; of the *Parmelan*, 6020 ft., by St. Clair and Val de Dingy. On this mountain are ice-caves, of which the *Glacière de Grand Anu* is the best worth seeing.

[From Annecy there is an excellent road to Bonneville leaving rt. *Thorens*, where a little chapel marks the site of the château of St. François de Sales (Rte. 150). A more beautiful rte. is by the valley of *Thones* (Inn: H. de Plainpalais), from which Bonneville or Sallanches may be reached by carriage-road (Rte. 150) or by mule-path; Cluses by the secluded *Vallée du Reposoir* and its *chartreuse* (Rte. 138).]

[From Annecy to Aix the Rly. ( $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.) passes through a rich and pleasing country to

*Luvigny Stat.* for the Gorge du Fier. S. of the line, on the carriage-road, is

*Alby*, a village of 800 Inhab., situated on the Chéron, and with one of the most remarkable objects between Annecy and Aix, the fine stone bridge—a single arch of great height and span. This village was more important formerly when the Counts of Geneva surrounded it with a wall and castles, of which some traces exist. They were built on both sides of the river.

*Marcellaz Stat.* in the valley of the Fier.

*Rumilly Stat.*

*Albens Stat.*, a village of 1000 Inhab. Beyond it the road overlooks the plain of Aix, where that town, the lake of Bourget, and the basin of Chambéry, bounded by the Mont du Chat, the Mont d'Azi, the Mont Granier, present a scene of singular beauty.

*Aix les Bains Stat.]*

The easiest road to Faverges is carried along the W. shore of the lake of Annecy, but the other is a prettier drive. [From Talloires (*Inn*: H. de l'Abbaye, fair quarters) a path leads over the *Col de Nantes* to Thones.]

From the end of the lake the road runs up the valley of Eau Morte about 3 m.; it is so nearly level that the fields are often inundated.

*Faverges* (*Inn*: Poste, good), a town of about 2000 Inhab., in the midst of rich meadows, wooded slopes and mountains. It was known in the 12th century as *Fabricarium*, a name derived from its numerous forges for copper and iron. It still possesses silk-mills, manufactories of cutlery, and tanneries; and since the completion of the road by Ugine into the Tarentaise has been daily improving. Its old castle is finely situated.

N. of Faverges extends the *Tournette*, a limestone range of about 7700 ft. above the sea, commanding an exceedingly fine panoramic view. Its

ascent, however, takes fully 6 hrs. from Faverges, and the actual top is not easy of access. It is called the *Fauteuil*, and is the summit of a curious rock, which rises like a tower from the comparatively level ridge. The sides of this rock actually overhang, and the summit can be reached only by climbing an awkward chimney. A traveller may descend in 4 hrs. to Talloires, on the lake of Annecy, from which side the ascent is very steep.

A slight elevation or pass divides the head of the valley of the Eau Morte from that of the Chaise, which runs into the Arly at Ugine (*Rte.* 150). The valley of *Monthoux* is richly wooded and picturesque. A good road from Faverges to Albertville along the plain, avoids the dirty town and hill of Ugine.

*Albertville* (see *Rte.* 150).

Those who are going by rly., either to St. Jean de Maurienne or to Chambéry, will take the diligence route from this place to

*Chamousset Stat.*; but if they travel by road to St. Jean de Maurienne, they will turn to the l. near the junction of the Isère with the Arc, and follow a shorter course by the l. side of the valley to *Aiguebelle Stat.*, about 20 m. from St. Jean de Maurienne, and 28 from St. Michel.

## ROUTE 153.

LYONS TO CHAMÉRY: A. BY LES ÉCHELLES. B. BY AIGUEBELETTE.

The shortest route from Lyons to Chambéry is by rly. The line from Lyons to Geneva (*Rte.* 53) is taken as far as the Culoz junct. stat. From Culoz to Chambéry the road is described, *Rte.* 151. A far more interesting course may be followed by either of the following routes. By rly. from Lyons towards Grenoble as far as Voiron Stat., from which place an extremely interesting expedition may be made to the Grande Chartreuse (See *Handbook for France*)

by the road to Les Échelles, turning off at *St. Laurent du Pont* (Inn: H. des Princes), 6 m. from the monastery. The traveller will return to *St. Laurent du Pont*, a few miles distant from the torrent of the Guiers Vif, which, before the annexation of Savoy, formed the frontier of France. This torrent is crossed at the village of

*Les Echelles*. (Inns: Lion d'Or; La Jeune France). The valley beyond this is a complete *cul-de-sac*. A wall of limestone, 800 ft. high, stretches directly across it; and from Les Échelles the eye in vain seeks for the means of exit. In former days the only road was a path of the most rugged and difficult kind, partly conducted through a cavern by means of ladders placed one above the other. This was called the *Chemin de la Grotte*, or *Les Échelles*, from which the neighbouring village derived its name. The difficulty of the passage was increased at times by the mountain torrent, which, when swollen, took its course through the cavern. It was utterly impassable for mules: travellers were sometimes carried through it, seated upon an arm-chair attached to the backs of stout Savoyard peasants, who performed the service of beasts of burden, as the South American Indians do at the present day on some of the passes of the Andes.

An improved road was made in 1670, by Duke Charles Emanuel II. of Savoy, at considerable cost, by removing vast masses of rock, so as to render the way passable for carriages. Napoleon, however, struck out a new line, and boldly pierced the mountain, forming a tunnel 1000 ft. long, 25 ft. high, and 25 ft. wide; along which two diligences fully loaded may pass abreast. A pious inscription, written by the Abbé St. Réal, commemorating the enterprise of Charles Emanuel in forming his road—which, though steep and narrow, and very inconvenient, was a grand undertaking for the period—may still be seen on the face of the rock.

The road is now carried through a wilderness of rocks, which gradually expands into a pretty valley.

[Switz.]

*St. Thibaud du Cour:*

Not far from this a little waterfall descends from the cliff on the rt., described by Rousseau as "*La plus belle que je vis de ma vie.*"

Another contracted ravine is passed before reaching Chambéry (Rte. 151).

#### B. By Aiguebelette.

Another route for pedestrians may be taken either from Voiron or direct from Lyons to *Pont Beauvoisin* (La Poste, good; De l'Etoile), formerly the frontier village on the high road to the Mont Cenis.

About 1½ m. from *Pont Beauvoisin* the road to Les Échelles is left: and at the village of Domessin a narrow road turns off to the l., and leads over a low hill well wooded, and thence through a remarkably rich plain, extending to those limestone precipices which are a continuation of the ridge of rocks at Les Échelles. Avoiding the principal road to La Bridoire, and crossing the plain direct from near *Pont Beauvoisin*, the path abruptly approaches these precipices. Close to their base a zigzag path, very steep, leads up the talus formed during many ages by the débris; in some places it is so narrow that the wall of the precipice can be touched by one hand, whilst the other overhangs the steep descent. A little time is gained by this short cut, and the situations are striking, but it is scarcely worth the fatigue. It leads to the same hamlet, Bridoire, which is highly picturesque in its situation, its cottages, and its water-mills. From this place the road ascends, crosses a ridge, and enters the basin of the *Lake of Aiguebelette*, a rich open valley, finely wooded, and where a view of the lake is obtained;—the whole scene is beautiful.

The road undulates amidst the magnificent walnut-trees which abound here, and passes through the village of *Lepin*. There is a singular character of tranquillity and retirement in this spot: the scenery resembles that of the most beautiful of our Cumberland lakes; but the visit of

a traveller is so rare an occurrence, that a year may pass away without any other stranger being seen than a little *négociant* making a shorter cut to Chambéry than by the great road of Les Échelles.

A ridge divides the village of Lepin from that of Aiguebellette; at its extremity on the left, overhanging the lake, is a château, in a most romantic and beautiful position; the road on the other side descends to Aiguebellette, and passes the ruins of the castle of its barons. This is of high antiquity; but its foundation is unknown, and it is therefore attributed to the Romans. According to a record it was repaired in the 11th century. It was burnt and demolished by one of the dauphins of Vienne, in the 15th century.

Aiguebelette is a poor little village, in a most beautiful situation; it has a poor "auberge." The lake is celebrated for the excellence and abundance of its carp, trout, and other fish. It is about 3 m. long, and 2 wide, and in its greatest depth about 150 ft. Around it are fields and meadows, but most of the mountain slopes are wooded. Oats, barley, potatoes, Indian corn, and flax are grown.

Beyond Aiguebelette the path skirts the churchyard, and enters a line of meadows beneath magnificent walnut-trees. Soon, however, it begins to ascend the mountain side, and presents views of the lake, the villages around it, and the distant hills which border the Rhone. It becomes very steep, ascending in zigzags, sometimes sunk in the crues of the mountain, at others rounding the projections. At length, after an hour, the summit (2995 ft.) is attained, and a glorious view expands over the basin of Chambéry, similar, but not equal, to that from the Mont du Chat. Instead of looking down into the lake of Bourget, it is seen, about 8 m. off, resting at the base of the mountain.

Chambéry appears, from the pass, to be just below the observer; and, in the road to it from Les Échelles (which may be seen) the cascade of *Cour* is distinctly visible. The

descent from the col may be made by two routes: that on the right seems to have been the old Roman road, but it is now impracticable for horses. There are traces of its having been well-constructed, in the remains of high and very thick walls, which supported, towards the plain, its terraces. Albanis de Beaumont says that, after half an hour's descent there are many stone coffins at the foot of the lateral rocks, with slabs which formerly covered them, upon which some characters may be seen, though they are too much effaced to be read: blocks, too, of cut stone are found, and he conjectures that they are the ruins of a chapel dedicated to St. Michel, and attached to an hospital which existed here in the 9th century, and, probably, under some other denomination, even in the time of the Romans.

The road at present used is only practicable for pedestrians or cattle: it might easily be rendered fit for charrs; but, as there is little intercourse across it, there is not sufficient motive for its improvement. It is that by which traffic formerly passed, and is thus described by an English traveller of the 17th cent.: "Mount Aiguebellet hath all the lineaments and shapes of the great Alpes, that is much winding and turning, deep precipices, Marons, or men with little open chairs to carry you up and down the hill for a crown; and much stumbling work."

The first village reached after an hour's descent is *Vimine*, ingeniously conjectured by Beaumont to be derived from *Via Minima*, because it lay on the shortest route from Lemincum (Chambéry) to Vienna Allobrogum (Vienne, on the Rhone). In going to or from Chambéry by this route, instead of that by Les Échelles, the pedestrian will gain 2 hrs.; the whole distance from Pont Beauvoisin requiring about 8 hrs.

From *Vimine* to the hamlet of Cognin is a short hour's walk over a bad road, but through beautiful scenes: thence, in half an hour, to Chambéry.

# ROUTE 154.

CHAMBERY TO TURIN BY THE MONT  
CENIS RAILWAY, OR BY THE MONT  
CENIS PASS.

Chambéry to Turin by Rly., 6 to  
7½ hrs.

*Chambéry* (Rte. 151). Above it are passed on the left, the castle of La Bâtie, and farther on, close to the road, that of Chignin, links of a line of forts on which fires were lighted to alarm the inhabitants in time of war. For these rude means in the middle ages, telegraphs have been substituted. Up the valleys of the Arc and Isère, the chain of old castles continues almost without an interruption. Rt. is *Mont Granier*, 6348 ft. The side facing Chambéry is a perpendicular escarpment, produced by the fall of an immense mass of the mountain in 1248: it buried 16 villages. The marks of this catastrophe are still visible in the series of hillocks, now covered with vineyards, called *Les Abîmes de Myans*, and in the midst of which are a number of small lakes. Mont Granier stands in the angle between the valley of Chambéry and that of Gresivaudan, which leads to Grenoble, and is traversed by the Isère. On the l. bank of the river, a few miles down, stand the ruins of the *Château Bayard*, the cradle of the illustrious knight "sans peur et sans reproche."

*Route de Grenoble* Stat., from which the Abîmes may be visited. Branch Rail to Grenoble.

*Montmélian* *Junct. Stat.* (Inn: H. des Voyageurs, not good.) This little town stands not far from the rt. bank of the Isère, at the junction of four roads:—from Mont Ceniz, issuing out of the valley of the Maurienne; from the Tarentaise and Little St. Bernard; from Grenoble along the beautiful valley of Graisivaudan; from Chambéry. The castle of Montmélian was long a bulwark of Savoy against France. Henry IV., while besieging it in 1600, was nearly killed by a

cannon-shot which covered him with dirt, and made the king cross himself devoutly; upon which Sully remarked, that he was happy to see that his Majesty was so good a Catholic. It was bravely and skillfully defended for 13 months against Louis XIII. by Count Geoffrey Benso de Cavour, an ancestor of the great modern statesman of that name. The works were demolished by Louis XIV., who took the place in 1705. A few fragments of wall, crowning the rock above the town, are the only remains of the former bulwark of Savoy and key of its Alps. A good white wine is grown near Montmélian.

[Public conveyances to the *Baths of Allevard*, a much-frequented watering place, 1550 ft. above the sea, in the beautiful valley of the Bréda (Inns: H. des Bains; H. Planta; H. de la Terrasse; H. du Louvre; and numerous pensions). About 15 m. by a road turning l. from the valley of Gresivaudan at Pontcharra (6½ m.). Walks or rides—to the gorge called *Bout du Monde*; the *Tour du Treuil*; the *Branc Farine* (about 4000 ft.), between the Bréda and the Isère; *Les Cinq Pointes* (4232 ft.), farther S., with a finer view; the *Chartreuse de St. Hugon*, 2½ hrs. E.

From the valley of the Bréda there are several passes; the *Col de Valloire* and *Col de la Croix* to La Chambre on the Mt. Ceniz road, by the Combe du Glandon; the *Col du Merdant* to Grenoble; and at the head of the valley the *Col de l'Homme* (7144 ft.) to Bourg d'Oisans. This track passes the *Sept Laux*, one of the curiosities of Dauphiné, a string of lakes, of which seven are of some size. Close to the largest, the *Lac du Col*, is a fisherman's chalet,—now fitted up as a small inn for travellers by the Soc. des Touristes du D. (4 beds and provisions)—where the night can be passed. Hence ascent of the *Rocher Blanc* (9616 ft.) in 3 hrs., very fine view. The track on the S. side of the pass descends steep rocks to *Rivière* in the Combe d'Olle, thence to Allemont and joins the road of the Col

du Lautaret, 5 m. from Bourg. An easier way from the inn to Le Rivier is by *Col de Vache*, farther to W. 2 hrs. to Le Rivier. The *Inn* (chez Jourdan) at *La Ferrière*, 2½ hrs. above the baths, is a good starting-point for these expeditions.]

The post-road follows the rt. bank of the Isère; the rly. the l. on an embankment of several miles, having crossed the river on a long lattice-bridge near Montmélan. On the l. bank is the village of *Coise*, with a mineral spring containing iodine, and reputed to be a specific for gottre. Beyond it, on the rt. bank, is

*St. Pierre d'Albigny Stat.*, 25 min. by omnibus, a neat little town with a good *Inn*. The slopes here are celebrated for wine. A little beyond *St. Pierre* is a fine feature of the valley, the

*Château de Miolans*, on a rock jutting out from the mountain side 800 or 900 ft. above the Isère. It commands extensive views up and down the valley, and across into that of the Arc; for it is nearly opposite the confluence of the rivers. This château belonged to one of the most ancient Savoyard families, distinguished as early as the 9th cent.; but the male line becoming extinct in 1523, the château was bought by Charles III., duke of Savoy, and made a state prison, which continued to be its use until the events of the French revolution united Savoy to France, when it was dismantled.

3 m. farther on the l. bank is

*Chamousset Stat.* *Diligences* daily to Albertville, Moutiers, and Bourg St. Maurice. Rly. in construction to Albertville. Here the rly. and high road leave the valley of the Isère for that of the Arc or Maurienne.

*Aignebelle Stat.* (*Inns*: Poste, Parfaite Union), in a tolerably wide triangular plain, on which may be traced remains of a great berg-fall of 1760, which almost entirely destroyed the village. The country hereabouts is unhealthy from marshes. The *Castle*, called *La Charbonnière*, was the birth-place of several counts of Savoy.

*St. Jean de Maurienne Stat.*, the town about 1½ m. on right (*Inns*: Europe, Poste, Voyageurs, all indifferent), capital of the province of Maurienne (3000 Inhab.), 1906 ft. above the sea, and original seat of the Dukes or Counts of Savoy. The *Cathedral* is of the 15th cent., and contains some good wood-carving and a stone reliquary. The vineyards grow a fair wine. [The *Col d'Arves* leads hence to *St. Jean d'Arves*, whence *Col de l'Infernet* and other passes to Lautaret road. From hence to Moutiers (Rte. 156) by the *Col de la Platière* in 10 hrs. A mule may be taken to the top. The path is steep to the village of Hermillon, and then nearly E. under precipices, to the little chapel of *N. D. de Mondandrey*. From this point it bears N. and N.E. to a hollow girt by cliffs, which are climbed in zigzags through a couloir to the pastures of Planey and *Châlets of Plum Monsieur*. Here a rock, called the *Bonnet du Prêtre*, is seen in the depression which forms the *col* (about 6800 ft.). The valley of Nant Brun, on the other side, is wild and stony. The path descends by a ridge, and on the W. side of ravines below it to *Deux Nants*, and thence to *St. Jean de Belleville*, about 2 hrs. from Moutiers. For the passes into Dauphiné, see Rte. 158.]

*St. Michel Stat.* (*Inns*: Poste, fair, dear; Maison Blanche; l'Union, fair).

[Hence the new road to Dauphiné over the *Col du Galibier* (to be completed 1880) will fall in (see Rte. 158A). Over the mountains N. is the pass of the *Col des Encombres* to Moutiers in the valley of the Isère.]

The Rly. goes up a fine gorge, then crosses the Arc on the Iron Bridge of La Denise, and has risen 1128 ft., or on an average 110 ft. per mile, from *St. Michel* when it reaches

*Modane Stat.* (*Buffet*). (*Inns*: Lion d'Or, comfortable; Croix Blanche), terminus of the Italian Rly., with the *Custom House*. The rly. line from Modane is the *heure de Rome*, 47 min. faster than the *heure de Paris*. The town, surrounded by rich pastures,

3494 ft. above the sea, has a Pop. of 1500.

[Three passes lead from Modane across the chain separating Savoy from Piedmont. The shortest and most direct, but rough track, fit only for pedestrians, is by the *Col de Fréjus*, leading in about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. to Bardonnèche. This passes very nearly over the part of the chain which is traversed by the tunnel. Somewhat further W. is the much easier pass of the *Col de la Roue*, frequently traversed with mules by the country people, and leading in  $6\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. to Bardonnèche. Farther still towards the W. is a rather higher and rougher path, but practicable for mules, by the *Col de la Saume*, or de la Vallée Etroite. For travellers going direct to Bardonnèche this has no advantage, but it leads by a very easy pass—the *Echelles de Planpinet* (5876 ft.)—to Briançon in Dauphiné. From the summit of the *Col de la Saume* a mountaineer will easily reach in 2 or  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. the summit of the *Mont Thabor*, 10,436 ft. in height, commanding a magnificent panoramic view of the western Alps. On the top is a stone pyramid marking one of the stations used 40 years ago in the measurement of an arc of parallel by the Sardinian engineers. The descent may be made to Modane, to St. Michel by Valmeinier, or to Bardonnèche. N. of Modane are the *Col de Chavière* and *Col d'Aussois* (Rte. 157) to Pralognan in the valley of the Doron, passing to the W. of the *Dent Parrachée* (12,179 ft.).]

From Modane the rly. follows the l. bank of the Arc, passes the gallery of St. Antoine, and then sweeps to the rt. to double back. It enters the lateral valley of Rieux Roux, dives through the Replat tunnel, and returns westward, skirting the hills, to the entrance of the great

*Tunnel through the Alps.*

It seems that the first person who suggested the present tunnel was a M. Médail of Bardonecchia, who in 1832 ascertained that from Fournau

near Modane, to Bardonecchia the distance was shorter than at any other known place of equal height in the Alps. He died in 1850; but the Piedmontese Government adopted his scheme, and, after careful surveys, the work was begun on the N. side in Aug. 1857. The piercing of the mountain was completed on 25th Dec. 1870, after 13 years and 3 months' labour, and the tunnel was opened for traffic in Sept. 1871. The engineers were Signori Grandis, Grattoni, and Sommeiller, all Piedmontese. The bargain between the French and Italian Governments and the Railway Company of Northern Italy was that the company should contribute 20 millions of francs towards the expenses; that the French Government should pay 19 millions of francs if the work was completed in 20 years, reckoning from 1862; and that the Italian Government should meet the remainder of the cost. It was, however, further agreed that if the work were finished at an earlier date, France should pay 500,000 francs more for every year gained upon the 20 years. Now, as the period was shortened by 11 years, France had to pay an additional sum of five and a half millions of francs. If the completion of the tunnel had been delayed beyond the 20 years, then Italy would have had to pay 500,000 francs for every year in excess of that period. When the work commenced, it was not possible to say what its duration might be. A mass of very hard quartzite was encountered at one time, which threatened to delay the operations considerably, but luckily it proved to be only 380 metres thick. One of the chief difficulties was that, as the tunnel would be very deep below the surface of the Alps overhead, no shafts could be sunk, and the work could be carried on from the ends only. The progress of the tunnel was very slow until improved boring machines had been invented and perfected. These machines were worked, not by steam, but by air compressed by means of water power. On the N. side a cut was made from the river Arc, leading water to work six over-shot water-wheels. Each of these

wheels worked two pumps which drove compressed air into a large number of receivers, shaped like long steam boilers. From these the compressed air was carried by an iron pipe up the face of the mountain and into the tunnel. By means of this compressed air acting on pistons, about fifty iron rods on the principle of the jumper-chisel were set to work against the face of the rock. When holes had been bored out by the chisels to a sufficient depth, they were charged with gunpowder, and the machine was withdrawn, and the rock blasted. Workmen then cleared away the rubbish, and the process was repeated. As long as the boring machine was at work there was an ample supply of air, but whilst the rubbish was being cleared away no air came in. To supply air, therefore, a mountain stream with a good head of water was led to near the mouth of the tunnel, where it worked four enormous pistons in as many cylinders, by means of which the foul air was drawn from the tunnel.

The works on the S. side were very similar to those on the N.; and the borings from the two ends met accurately, although starting at opposite sides of the mountain, more than 7 miles apart, and working up different slopes.

The tunnel was made perfectly straight, in order to avoid the risk of the proper direction being lost, and short curved branches to the tunnel were made at each end, to connect with the line as made outside.

The length of the tunnel, with its curved branches, is 14,050 yards, or eight miles all but 30 yds. The height above the sea of the N. end is 3942 feet; the S. end is higher by 438 feet. The N. portion of the tunnel is on an incline of 1 in 45, and for a short distance 1 in 34. The S. portion is on an incline in the opposite direction of 1 in 2000. The middle of the tunnel is thus about 15 feet higher than the S. end.

The tunnel is lined with brick or masonry throughout, and has a double line of rails, with a footpath on each

side. The cost of the tunnel is put at 3,000,000*l.*, or 220*l.* a yard. The internal width of the base is 25 ft. 3½ in., its height varies from 24½ ft. to 25½ ft., and the "gauge" of the rails is 4 ft. 8½ in. The highest point of the Gran Vallone, the hill through which it passes, is 9500 ft. The great mass of the rocks perforated were calcareous schists.\*

The passage of the tunnel occupies from the N. about 28 minutes, from the S. somewhat less. The carriages are very well lighted; there is no perceptible smoke in the tunnel, and the air is far purer than that on the Metropolitan Railway. The tunnel is dimly lighted with gas lamps. Soon after the line emerges from the tunnel

13 m. *Bardonecchia* (*Bardonnèche*) *Stat.* is reached in a bleak and dreary valley, where winter and patches of snow are often found after leaving at Modane spring and warmth. About half a mile off is the miserable village (Pop. 1000) of Bardonecchia, where there are some poor *Inns*. [Above Bardonecchia to N.E. extends Vallée di Rochemolles, surrounded by little-known peaks. Bramans may be reached by Col de Pelouse, Col d'Étiachu, or Col Sommeiller, and Exilles by the Col di Rochemolles and the Val di Galambre.]

The scenery is very wild, and there are 24 tunnels and galleries between this place and Bussoleno; two of them more than a mile long.

The railway runs along the bottom of the valley, hemmed in with high mountains, to

3 m. *Beaulard* *Stat.* The village is on the hill at a short distance on the rt. The name is supposed to be derived from the *Bellari*, a tribe which in former times inhabited the Cottian Alps, and whose name is inscribed

\* For further details on this gigantic work, and on the railway emerging from it by the valley of the Dora Riparia as far as Turin, see the 'Guide au Tunnel du Mont Cenis,' by A. Covino, Turin, 1871, and *Wymper's 'Scrambles among the Alps.'* A series of the rocks pierced by the tunnel is to be seen in the Museum of the Academy of Sciences at Turin.

upon the Roman arch at Susa. Following the muddy Bardonecchia torrent, which the railway crosses at Savaux, we enter the valley and pass the torrent of the Dora Riparia, before reaching

4 m. *Oulx Stat.*, at a short distance from the village (rt.) (*Inns*: H. de France; l'Etoile d'Or, close to stat.). This village is one of the largest in the valley of Dora, along which the diligence road ascends to the Col de Mont Genève (Rte. 161), and to Briançon beyond the French frontier. The rly. crosses the Dora by a lattice-bridge, to follow the opposite bank of the torrent as far as

4 m. *Salbertrand Stat.* (*Inn*: Alb. Grande, close to stat. Remarkable *ch.* of the early part of the 16th cent. in the town). The peaks on the l. are those of the group of the Mont Ambin, whilst on the rt. is the Col dell' Assietta, over which there is a path into the high Vaudois valleys, to the road to *Pourrières, Fénestrelles*, and *Perosa*. It was near Salbertrand that the battle took place on August 24, 1689, between Henry Arnaud, the Vaudois leader, and the Marquis de Larrey, in which the Piedmontese general was defeated, and after which the Vandois leader was able to regain his native valleys.

At Salbertrand the engine is again changed for an engine adapted for the steep descent to Bussoleno.

For the next ten miles the railway scenery is amongst the most wonderful of the kind in Europe; the railway for a great part of the distance being carried along the face of a steep mountain high above the villages, fields, and river.

Soon after leaving Salbertrand Stat. the line crosses the Dora, and enters a long tunnel. On emerging from this, a glimpse is caught on the left of the village of Salbertrand, with its pasture some 500 ft. below; after this many tunnels are threaded, and the intervals afford but scanty glimpses of the valley.

The view looking down upon the town and singular fort of *Exilles* is very striking. In this part of the val-

ley of the Dora a battle took place in 1717 between the French, who were then invading Piedmont under the Comte de Bellisle, and the Piedmontese, in which the French commander lost his life, after a hard-fought action.

6 m. *Chiomonte* (or *Chaumont*) *Stat.* Here the railway is in a more open valley, which it soon leaves and again comes out upon the face of the mountain. The old Mont Genève road is crossed, the zigzags of which look like the coils of a rope resting on the slope. The town of Susa is seen in the valley some three miles off, with the fine peak of the *Roccia Melone* above it.

4 m. *Meana Stat.*, about two miles from Susa. The line continues to descend rapidly, until the Dora Riparia is crossed to

5 m. *Bussoleno Junct. Stat.* The walled town, 2300 Inhab., is on the rt. bank of the Dora. Some interesting rambles may be made from here: 1. To the old castle of Brazolo, about one hour on foot. 2. To Valle di Viù, by the Col de la Croix de Fer; ascent about 5 hours, descent 3 hours.

#### *Old Pass of Mont Cenis.*

The Mont Cenis is one of the historic passes of the Alps. Known from Roman times, it has been passed by many sovereigns and armies from Charles the Great in 773 to Napoleon. Louis le Débonnaire founded the Hospice. At the end of the 17th cent. the track was enlarged, so as to be made passable for light carriages.

The present carriage-road was constructed by the Chevalier Fabbroni, under the orders of Napoleon, at a cost of 300,000*l.*, and was commenced in 1803 and finished in 1810. It is one of the safest and most practicable over the Alps during the winter. The valley of the Arc above St. Jean de Maurienne is on a grand scale, with wild and romantic scenery at *Fort l'Esseillon* on the ascent from Modane. On the pass there is a fine view from the 17th Refuge, and beautiful prospects on the descent into Italy.

[The *Mont Cenis*, or *Fell Railway*, opened 1868, was an experimental line, constructed (at a cost of 8000*l.* per mile) by Mr. Fell on a principle patented some 40 years ago by Mr. Vignolles and Mr. Ericsson, and first tried on the Cromford and High Peak line in England. The chief features of this plan are horizontal wheels which, when the break is applied, grasp a *central rail*, and thus enable trains to traverse curves of 135 feet radius, and to ascend and descend with safety gradients of 1 in 13, and even 1 in 12. This could not be done by an ordinary locomotive, and the attempt proved successful, except in a pecuniary point of view.]

From Lanslebourg, where the pass properly begins, the line climbed on the outer edge of Napoleon's road in 6 sweeping zigzags, with a gradient of 1 in 15 to 1 in 12½, to the top, a distance of 6½ m. and a height of 2240 ft. (or 4460 ft. above St. Michel). On the side of Italy it descended 5211 ft. to Susa, curling in its course like a serpent. The maximum speed here allowed was 15 m. per hr., but with the central-rail breaks moderately applied, the train ran easily down the steep and circuitous incline. The carriages were on the American model, with entrance behind and seats arranged in the omnibus fashion, and each had a guard and two breaks. The Fell railway was constructed entirely by English engineers and with English capital. For 30 m. it had the central rail, and the gauge was narrower than on the ordinary narrow-gauge lines in England and France. The drivers were English.]

From Modane the road ascends high above the Arc, where a grand gorge serves as a natural and tremendous fosse to *Fort l'Esseillon* or *Bramans*, built on the opposite height, and commanding, with its many-mouthed batteries, the passage towards Italy. This fort presents a magnificent appearance. Above it is the village of *Aussois* (Inn: *Soleil d'Or*, poor), above which towers the *Dent Par-ruchée* (12,179 ft.), easily accessible

in 7 or 8 hrs., and commanding a most extensive view of the Alps and the plains of Italy. A light bridge, spanning the gorge is a striking object: it is called the *Pont du Diable*. Fine waterfall. The road passes

*Le Verney*, chief hamlet of the commune of *Bramans* (Inn: *Croix Blanche*, poor and dear), where *Horace Walpole* lost his lap-dog, which was carried off by a wolf pouncing down upon it from the forest.

[Rt. to Susa, by the *Col du Clapier* (Rte. 155), the first 2 hrs. by char-road, up the l. bank of the torrent *St. Pierre* to *Planay*. Higher up is a path on the l. to the *Little Mt. Cenis*.]

*Thermignon* (Inn: *Lion d'Or*, recommended). [N. a path over the *Plan du Loup* to *Entre deux Eaux*, and thence N.W. by the *Col de la Vanoise* (Rte. 157) to *Pralognan*.] On leaving *Thermignon* the road is carried up a very steep ascent.

*Lanslebourg*. (Inns: *H. de l'Europe*, fair and moderate; *H. Valloire*, extortionate), a wretched village, full of cabarets, at the foot of the ascent of *Mont Cenis*, 4465 ft. above the sea. French Custom-house here. (For the upper valley of the *Arc*, see Rte. 156.) At the end of the village the road crosses the *Arc*, and ascends the mountain by 6 easy and well-constructed zigzags, which the rly. followed. In winter, when deep snow covered the inequalities of the mountain, travellers descended in a sledge to *Lanslebourg* in 10 minutes! Perpendicular descent 1968 ft.

The highest point of the pass is 6825 ft. above the sea; thence the road descends to the plain of *Mont Cenis*, passing near the margin of a small lake, generally frozen during 6 months of the year: it is famed for its delicious trout: the fishery belongs to the monks of the *Hospice*. About 2 m. from the col are

*Les Tiervettes* (Inns: Posthouse of the *Mont Cenis*—*Monte Cenisio*; and the Old Post-house, rough, but toler-

able quarters for Alpine excursions). [From the posthouse the ascent of the *Little Mont Cenis* (Rte. 155) commences.]

About a mile beyond the Post is the *Hospice*. The existing edifice, built by Napoleon, is now occupied, half by a corps of gendarmes, the other half by monks of the Benedictine order, who exercise gratuitous hospitality towards poor travellers. The house contains two or three bed-rooms for guests of the higher class. Near the Hospice is a loopholed wall, for the defence of the pass. For 2 m. farther the road is nearly level to

*La Grande Croix*, a wretched Inn at the lower extremity of the plain; here the descent begins.

*Molaret*, the first Italian hamlet. A footpath descends from the high road a little below the posthouse, much shortening the distance for pedestrians. From some of the turns beyond this place fine views of the valley of the Dora are obtained. A gallery is passed built under a torrent, but is used only when the main-road is dangerous or destroyed. The descent of the road is now continuous by long zigzags to Susa, where the Italian rlys. commence.

*Susa* (Inns—bad, charges high:—Antica Posta; Francia; Sole).

This ancient city, the Segesium of the Romans, scarcely numbering 3000 Inhab., is still the seat of a bishopric. It is picturesque in its mediæval towers and gates, and is surrounded with lovely scenery. The Dora-Susina runs by the side of the town.

The *Arch* or *City Gate*, erected by Julius Cottius, the son of King Donatus, about B.C. 8, in honour of Augustus, is on a road leading up from the S.W. of the Cathedral to the Old Castle outside the town, and is supposed to have stood on the Roman road which crossed Mont Genève. This chieftain of the Alpine tribes, having submitted to the Roman authority, records his dignity under the humbler title of Prefect. The arch is of white

marble, and the upper part is destroyed. It is somewhat remarkable that the columns are set on a pedestal which raises them considerably above the pilasters of the arch. The inscription, now nearly effaced, gave the names of his 14 mountain clans, and all that can be made out now are the words IMP. CAESARI AUGUSTO DIVI F. PONTIFICI MAXIMO TRIBUNIC. POTESTATE XV. IMP. XIII. The basso-relievos represent the sacrifices (Suovetaurilia) and other ceremonies by which the treaty was ratified and concluded. The order Corinthian, in a good style for a provincial town. The bas-reliefs on the lesser sides have been destroyed.

There are two other arches of Roman construction not far from the principal one.

The *Cathedral* of St. Justus is of the 11th cent., and has a lofty campanile, in the Lombard style. The centre arches and massy piers of the nave belong to a more ancient fabric; the rest is in a simple Gothic style. In the Chapel of the Virgin is a gilded statue in wood, of the 12th cent., of Adelaide Countess of Susa, the princess through whom the House of Savoy acquired the dominions which became the origin of its power in Italy. This celebrated lady was thrice married, her third husband being Otho, son of Humbert I., Count of Maurienne. In the right transept is a triptych, with the figure of Hugh Scott of Lincoln, an English bishop. In one of the chapels is a curious mediæval group in bronze of our Lady of Roccia Melone with St. George and Bonifacio d'Asti (see below). The font, hollowed out of a single block of green Susa marble, is a work of the 11th cent., with an ambiguous inscription. In the sacristy is a large silver cross, said to have been given by Charlemagne.

Ancient towers, gateways, and Gothic porticoes add to the picturesque effect of the town.

Above Susa are the extensive ruins of the fort of *La Brunetta*, once considered the key of the valley, and which, with the fortresses of Exilles

and Fenestrelles, formed the line of defences of Piedmont on the side of France. It was destroyed by the French in 1798, in virtue of a treaty with Sardinia. The road over Mont Cenis passes near the ruins.

[The *Rochemelon*, or *Monte di Roccia Melone* (*Arx Romulea*), 11,557 ft., can be ascended from Susa in 7 to 8 hrs. This peak was formerly believed to be one of the highest in the Alps, and Coryat, an Elizabethan traveller, was told it was 14 m. high! Upon the summit is a chapel, founded by *Bonifacio Rovero d'Asti*, in 1358, who, having been taken prisoner by the Mahometans, made a vow that, if set free, he would erect an oratory here in honour of the Virgin. The fetters which bound him are preserved in the chapel. An annual procession takes place to this chapel on the 15th of August, the feast of the Assumption. The ascent is accomplished without difficulty, and a mule may be mounted as far as the *Casa d'Asti*. There is a rude path to the summit. From Susa it is 5½ hrs. to the *Casa d'Asti* (9441 ft.), whence the top will be reached in 2 hrs. The *Grande Croix* on the plateau of Mont Cenis, may be reached in 2½ hrs. from top of Rochemelon. There is another track from the Mont Cenis Hospice. The summit can also be reached from the side of Savoy, starting from Besans in the valley of the Arc (Rte. 156). The ascent takes 7 hrs., and lies in part over glacier.

The view from the Rochemelon is one of the finest in this part of the Alps, only surpassed perhaps as a panorama by that from Monte Viso.

Some of the writers who erroneously maintain that Hannibal crossed the Alps by the pass of Mont Cenis, believe him to have led his army to the top of Roccia Melone in order to encourage his soldiers by the view of Italy!

[3 m. above Susa, upon the old and now almost abandoned road to the Hospice on the N. side of the river, are the remains of the Abbey of *Novalesa*, founded by Abbo, a noble of Susa, about the year 726. It was ruined by Saracens from Fraxinetum, in Pro-

vence, in A.D. 910, but was soon rebuilt.]

A branch line connects Susa with the Mt. Cenis Rly.

Just outside of Susa, the view, looking back upon the town, in which the Roman arch is conspicuous, is very beautiful. It is equally so on looking down the long valley. The farthest extremity of this valley, and 2000 feet above it, a lofty rock stands out upon the summit of which may be descried the tower of the Abbey church of San Michele de Cluse, founded in A.D. 999, of which the Prieuré in the valley of Chamonix was a dependency. The Roman road over the Alps, which was constructed when Cottius submitted to Augustus, passed up this valley, and, turning to the S.W. at Susa, along the valley of the Dora, crossed by the pass of *Mt. Genève*. This became the road most frequented by the Romans between Italy and Cisalpine Gaul. The military road of Pompey and Cæsar passed through Oulx, and over the Col de Sestrières.

At Foresto, on the l., are quarries of the serpentine, called *Verde di Susa*, very much like the verd' antique, but with less durability. Near at hand is a great cavern, known as the *Orrido di Foresto*, into which the stream flowing from the glaciers of Roccia Melone is precipitated. There is another fine cave not far distant, called the *Orrido di Chianoc*. On the rt. is

*San Giorio*, displaying its array of walls and towers, and an ancient fortress ascending the hill.

*Bussoleno Junction.*

The rest of the route to Turin is described in the *Handbook for North Italy*.

Trains from Susa to Turin several times a-day, taking over 2 hrs. to perform the journey of 33 m.

**TURIN Terminus.** (*Inns*: Grand H. de Turin opposite the station, good; H. de l'Europe, and H. Trombetta, formerly Feder, both excellent; H. de la Ligurie, near the Rly. Stat., good.)

For TURIN, see the *Handbook for North Italy*.

## ROUTE 155.

BRAMANS TO SUSA, BY (A) THE PETIT MONT CENIS OR (B) THE COL DE CLAIRÉE.

A. *The Petit Mont Cenis.*

The Petit Mont Cenis is a little-used pass leading from a glen which opens at Bramans to the Hospice on the Mont Cenis in about 5½ hrs. It is more laborious than the Mont Cenis, less direct than the Col de Clairée, and its chief interest is due to its being one of the passes which has been put forward as the route of Hannibal's passage. A summary of the arguments which convince some good judges that this was the pass crossed by the Carthaginian army will be found in 'Ball's Alpine Guide,' Section "South-western Alps."

As far as Planay (2 hrs.) the track is a rough char-road. A steep path leads in 2 hrs. more to the Col. Hence a descent of 1½ hr. by a pleasant path leads to the posthouse of the Mont Cenis.

The slopes around the plain of the Mont Cenis have some of the best grass in the Alps, and a particularly rich flora; the pastures leading to the Little Mont Cenis are of great extent.

B. *Col de Clairée, or Col du Clapier.*

A steep ascent leads from Planay to the Combe d'Ambin, as the upper glen is called. Above it rises one of the finest peaks in this part of the Alps, the *Roche d'Ambin* (11,093 ft.): on its summit is one of the stations used in the triangulation and measure of an arc of the meridian across the great chain. The entire crest of the Ambin is covered with glaciers, and every gully is traced by a white bed of snow which rests within it.

[To reach this valley from the col of the Little Mont Cenis it is necessary to mount directly up some rocks, and continue for a short time on that side of the mountain; the path after-

wards descends among the huge stones which strew this sterile-looking valley; and, keeping always on the right of the ravine below, which forms the Combe d'Ambin, and through which a stream, like a thread of silver, flows, the path ascends by a rugged and broken course to the chalets of *Savines*. Here there is a little spot of meadow land, and some scanty herbage.

On the left, a rugged path leads across from the posthouse on the Cenis by some little lakes, the *Lacs Giaset*, to this valley, above the chalets of *Savines*: it is rather shorter, but more fatiguing, than that by the Little Mont Cenis. Wolves are not uncommon in the forest of *Bramante*, lower down the valley; the dogs kept at the chalets of *Savines* are of great power, having their necks armed with spiked collars. The wolves here are probably the successors of those ravenous rascals which gobbled up Walpole's poor little dog Toby, as his master passed with the poet Gray at the foot of this forest on his way into Italy.]

Above the meadows of *Savines*, the path rises amidst rocks and stones, and at length reaches a little lake in an elevated plain, in which all seems lone and desolate. The black precipices of the mountain of *Bart* on the left and those of *Mont d'Ambin* on the right, bound its sides: glaciers from the *Ambin* sweep down to the lake, and small cataracts, from the melting of the ice, mark the dark cliffs with wavy lines of light. Amidst this apparent sterility thousands of gentianellas, *ranunculus glacialis*, violets of the richest fragrance, and other Alpine flowers, grow and bloom unseen, in every swampy spot, and between the stones with which the plain and col are covered.

This lake is filled by the melting of the glaciers of the *Mont d'Ambin*. It is called the *Lac de Savines*, and is about 1 m. long. At its upper extremity is a low ridge certainly not a hundred feet above the level of the lake. This is a crest of the great chain, the *Col de Clairée*, also called

*Col du Clapiet* (8107 ft.) (5 hrs. from Bramans). Hence the bold pinnacles of the *Trois Dents d'Ambin* (11,096 ft.) have been climbed with difficulty. From the Col a track leads rt., by a wild and difficult course, over the *Col de Touilles* to Salabertrand, in the Val d'Exilles.

The route by the Col de Clairée to Susa lies on the left: the descent is down a steep and rocky hollow, which terminates at the crossing of a bright stream near a pasturage. This spot is a delicious place of rest. At the first moment it is not easy to see how a farther descent is to be effected. The traveller stands upon a platform, seemingly surrounded by precipitous rocks; but there will be little disposition immediately to seek a path, for from this spot one of the most interesting views in the Alps is presented. Immediately below is the deep basin and narrow valley of the Clairée, which is almost always filled with vapour which seems to boil as in a caldron. Beyond it the mountain above Chaumont, in the Val d'Exilles, bounds the view; but, turning towards the left, the Combe of Susa is seen over the intervening mountains, even to its termination in the plains of Piedmont, stretching away to the horizon far beyond the hill of the Superga. On the rt. are the steep rocks, which must be climbed by those who would go from the Col de Clairée to the Col de Touilles. Though long and extremely steep, the descent will present no real difficulty to a practised cragsman; but none other should attempt it without a guide. In looking back when the head of the *Val de Clairée* has been reached, it is not easy to trace the line of descent over rocks which in places seem quite perpendicular.

This was one of the many difficult passes by which the Vaudois, in 1689, under their pastor and captain, Henri Arnaud, returned to their valleys. They had, after entering Savoy, wandered by a course rather difficult to trace, until they had crossed the Col du Bonhomme, whence they descended into the Tarentaise, traversed the Col d'

Iseran into the valley of the Arc; thence by the Mont Cenis, the Little Mont Cenis, and the Col de Clairée, into the valley of the Clairée. Here they encountered the troops of the Duke of Savoy, who prevented their entry into the valley of Exilles, and they were compelled to return and cross the Col de Touilles, from which the southern branch of the Clairée, called the Ciauri, flows. The account of their sufferings, before they cleared these mountain passes, and so signally defeated their enemies at the bridge of Salabertrand, forms a part of one of the most interesting narratives ever published; it was written by Henri Arnaud himself, their colonel and pastor.\*

Two more direct passes lead from Bramans to near Exilles: the *Col d'Agnel*, to S.E. of Roche d'Ambin (easily accessible from N.E. or S.W.), and *Col d'Ambin*, or *de Galambre*, still further to W. The track leaves that above described at Planay, and passes over glaciers. (Bramans to Exilles in 9 hrs.) The whole group is very little known, and deserves exploration.

*Susa Station* (Rte. 154).

It is possible to follow the water-course from the point where it diverges from the Clairée, along the face of the precipice, and joining the road of the Mont Cenis 1 hr. above Susa, thereby save some time. A steady head is necessary.

\* It was translated by the late Hugh Dyke Acland, from a rare copy, under the title of 'The Glorious Recovery by the Vaudois of their Valleys.' London, Murray, 1827. The best account of the Vaudois is to be found in the works of the late Rev. D. Gill.

# ROUTE 156.

CHAMBÉRY TO LANSLEBOURG, BY THE  
TARENTEISE—COL D'ISÉRA—COL DE  
LA LEISSE.

| Chambéry.               | Kil. | Eng. m. |
|-------------------------|------|---------|
| Montmélian . . .        | 14   | = 8½    |
| Chamousset (Rail).      | 15   | = 9     |
| Albertville . . .       | 24   | = 15    |
| Moutiers . . .          | 27   | = 16½   |
| Aime . . .              | 16   | = 10    |
| Bourg St. Maurice .     | 14   | = 8½    |
| Ste. Fol . . .          |      | 8       |
| La Thuile de Ste. Fol . |      | 2½      |
| Brévières . . .         |      | 6       |
| Tignes . . .            |      | 3       |
| Laval . . .             |      | 3½      |
| Col d'Iséran . . .      |      | 5½      |
| Bonneval . . .          |      | 7½      |
| Bessans . . .           |      | 5½      |
| Lanslebourg . . .       |      | 8       |

Railway from Chambéry to Chamousset Stat. (Rte. 154), whence diligences run to Albertville in 3 hrs. (rly. in construction), to Moutiers in about 6 hrs.

The road crosses the Isère close to the station, and then goes up the valley through extensive marshes on the dyke which has been formed to retain the river. The mountains on each side slope upwards gradually, so as to afford views of the higher villages and pastures, and occasionally of the summits. To the rt. is seen the *Château of Ste. Hélène*. The road is very straight, level, and dusty, as far as

*Albertville* (Inn: Balances, poor and extortionate). E. of it, 11½ m. *Beaufort*, with passes to the road of the Col du Bonhomme and valley of the Isère (described in Rte. 150).

Here our route turns sharp to the S., following the course of the Isère, and entering the lovely district of the *Tarentaise*. The road lies on the rt. bank, through a succession of beautiful scenes. The lower ranges of the mountains are wooded, the valley narrow, retired, and pastoral. The ruins of *Castles* are often seen, on rocky heights with rich backgrounds of forest trees; and the traveller passes through pleasant shades overhung by walnut or chestnut trees.

Immediately after leaving Albertville the river Arly is crossed, and the old town of *Conflans* (Rte. 150) skirted at the foot of the hill. The next village is *La Bâthie* (*Oblimum*), with a ruined castle, and pass to the l. to Beaufort; and then *Roche-Cevins*, about half-way between Albertville and Moutiers. About 4 miles farther, near the hamlet of *Petit Cœur* (celebrated among geologists for the mixture of fossils of the coal-measures and lias), there is a fine cataract, which dashes down amidst immense rocks. A path on the l. leads to Beaufort by the *Col de la Louze* (Rte. 151). About 2 m. farther the valley opens into a rich little plain, where the pretty village of *Aigueblanche* is situated. Here the road rises for some distance, in order to avoid a gorge of the Isère, and then descends again to

*Moutiers Tarentaise* (Inns: Couronne; H. des Diligences) is situated on the confluence of the Isère and the Doron or Bozel. Inhab. 1956. This, the capital of the Tarentaise before its annexation to France in 1860, derives its present name from an old monastery, which was built in the 5th cent. at a little distance from the ancient *Darentasia*. The history of its church is perfect from its first archbishop in A.D. 420 to its last in 1793, a period of 1373 years. The city now contains an hospital for the poor, founded in the 10th century, and an *Ecole des Mines*, in which the productions of the mines of Peisey are examined. There were extensive salt-works here, where salt was made from a spring of weak brine. They are now converted into a bathing-establishment.

To the S. at Moutiers is the opening of a network of valleys which run into the recesses of the mountains between the valleys of the Arc and Isère—to the *Grand Casse*, *Grand Motte*, and *Dent Parrachée*—and by several passes (Rtes. 154, 157) to the Mt. Cenis road, and to the Val de Tignes (Rte. 157). *Brides les Bains*, with a comfortable Inn, is 4 m. up the valley of the Doron.

*Omnibuses* to Bourg in 2 hrs., starting at 5 A.M., 2 P.M. and 5½ P.M. (Le Courier).

The road, leaving the little basin of Moutiers, goes through some thoroughly pastoral scenery, and then a gorge which opens at the village of *St. Marcel*. The narrowing valley is highly picturesque, but the inhabitants present the filthy and decrepit appearance which is too common in these regions. The road, which formerly passed on the left bank of the *Isère*, now rises on the right bank, and is carried over a neck of rock at a great height above the torrent. The view down and back upon *St. Marcel* is very fine. This road was made by Victor Emanuel, Duke of Savoy, in 1766.

The valley opens above this defile; and below the road, is seen the village of *Centron*, still preserving the name of an ancient Alpine people, the *Centrones*.

*Aime* (*Axuma*), one of the chief towns of the *Centrones*, which, according to inscriptions found here, was called *Forum Claudii* before the name of *Axuma* was given to it. On a hill above it are remains of Roman fortifications: and some round towers of great antiquity, both in the town and on the site of the fort, are still standing, the masonry having been strong enough to hold together through so many ages. On the lower side of the town is a very ancient and curious crypt, containing a Roman tomb or altar. Above it is the comparatively modern ruined chapel of an ex-convent, in the walls of which are stones bearing Roman inscriptions, one in honour of *Trajan*. From the crypt, it is said, the commencement of a subterranean passage has been traced for some distance. The village was overwhelmed by a landslip in the 13th cent., and it is not improbable that the present crypt was previously on the level of the ground. Below the old convent are remains of a castle, which, though poor and barbarous enough, was the residence of a powerful family. It is

related that a member of this family, being defeated in a lawsuit, requested time to produce further evidence in his favour. Soon afterwards he caught one of the judges, and sent his head to the others, as the further evidence. [About an hour's walk on the mountains to the S., are the lead-mines of *Macot*. N. to Beaufort by the *Col du Cormet*, Rte. 151.]

The valley above *Aime*, though fine, is not so beautiful as below; and the road not quite so good. The vine grows as far as *Belletre*, which is nearly opposite to the village of *Landry*, and valley of *Peisey*, leading to the mines of *Peisey*, which, with those of *Macot*, are the most celebrated in Savoy. They are situated near the foot of the glaciers of *Mont Pourri*, more than 5000 ft. above the sea: the ore, a fine-grained sulphuret of lead, contains 60 ounces of silver per ton. About 1785 these mines yielded annually some 4000 marks of silver, and 40,000 quintals of lead. The production gradually fell off, and they were abandoned in 1862.

As the valley is ascended, the pass of the Little *St. Bernard* (Rte. 149) opens to the observer a more obvious course than that of the road up the *Isère*, which turns again from *Bourg* to the E. and S.S.E. under the great chain, and continues in that direction to its source.

*Bourg St. Maurice*. Inn: H. des Voyageurs, tolerable. (Rte. 149.)

[From this point the traveller may explore *Val Peisey*, and ascend the

*Mont Pourri*, sometimes called *Chaffe Quarre*, the second in height (*Grande Cassé* first) and one of the most beautiful of the *Tarentaise* peaks. Its steep sides, covered with dense forest below and with ice above, are well seen from the *Col du Bonhomme* and *Val Bellaval*. It can be climbed from *Val Peisey*, or from *Ste. Foi*, in the *Val de Tignes*, also from *Ste. Foi*, by N.E. arête (a long and difficult route). It extends some 8 m. N. and S., and has on that line 3 peaks, of which the S. is opposite *Brévières*; the central

and highest, 12,428 ft., about 2 m. farther N. This was first ascended, 1861, by the guide Michel Croz (lost on the Matterhorn), by himself, in 8 hrs. from Entre deux Nants.

From Peisey (chez Baudin, the best of 2 aub.), about 3 hrs. from Bourg, a traveller ascends E., 2½ hrs., to the chalets of *Entre deux Nants* (6840 ft.), where he can pass the night. The ascent continues to some small lakes, with noble view of Mt. Blanc; then rt. (or S.) up steep débris to the top of the ridge, which offers a pass to Ste. Foi, *Col du Pourri* (9620 ft.). Thence S. by glacier and névé, circling at last round a snow-basin, whence a direct descent can be effected to the chalets of La Sevolière, to the S.W. spur and final peak, which is climbed on the S. side. *Pourri* signifies rotten, an appropriate name, as the quartzite crumbles beneath the feet. There are passes S.S.W., the *Col de Frette* (6 hrs.) and *Col du Plauséry* (circuitous); or, cross over summit of *Aig. du Midi de Peisey* (11,227 ft., a marvellous view) from Val Peisey to Champagny in the Val de Prérou.]

A carriage-road is in course of construction up the Val de Tignes, and is completed except between La Thuile and Brevières.

It takes one day to go from Bourg to Laval, and another across the Col d'Iseran to Lanslebourg and the Mont Cenis. The whole, however, may be accomplished in one very long day. The scenery of the Val de Tignes is superb, but hitherto the bad accommodation has interfered with its enjoyment. The Inns in the higher parts of the valley are now yearly improving, and the encouragement given to the inhabitants by the activity of the French Alpine Club, and the increased number of travellers, will ensure their continued progress.

A little beyond the bridge over the Recluse and the village of *Nes* the road leaves the rte. of the Little St. Bernard, and descends through meadows and woods into the Val de Tignes. The approach to Ste. Foi is beautiful. Rt. and l., on opposite sides

of a ravine, are the church towers of Villaroger and Ste. Foi, and high above them the snows of the Pourri. Zigzags for 20 min., passing a waterfall in a lateral chasm, lead to

2½ hrs. *Ste. Foi* (Inns: Au Mont Iseran; Mont Blanc; à la Jeune France), with a large ch., mairie, and café restaurant, a most picturesque and charmingly situated village, with a near view of Mt. Pourri. [E. by the *Col du Mont* or *Col du Lac* to the Val Grisanche (Rte. 148).] Hence in ¼ hr. by a winding mule-path amongst fruit and walnut trees to a road-side chapel, where the scenery becomes delightfully alpine, the path mounting among rocks and pines on the edge of a gorge.

½ hr. *La Thuile de Ste. Foi* (2 Inns—H. des Voyageurs, with a promising exterior). [From La Thuile, or Tignes, an excursion may be made to *La Croix de Feuillotte*, one of the minor peaks of the *Ormelune*, the highest point in the range between the Col du Mont and Col Vaudet. It commands a magnificent view of the chain of Mont Blanc and of a great portion of the Savoy Alps. It is possible on the same day to ascend to the Col Vaudet, or Col du Clou, a pass communicating with the head of the Val Grisanche (Rte. 148). The scenery towards the summit is wild and striking, but there is no extensive view. The descent into the Val Grisanche lies over steep slopes of snow and debris.] ¼ hr. beyond La Thuile the path enters the forest to emerge from it in another ¼ hr., in one of the most lovely scenes of the valley, an irregular opening among the mountains, full of green knolls, with the chalets of Rey, and around them the forest, through which a long catanact rushes down. An ascent of 20 min. leads to a fine point of view of the *Glacier de la Gurru*, descending from Mt. Pourri. High up on a terrace below it are the church and chalets of *La Gurru*, which are said to have been more than once destroyed by a fall of ice, but the village is apparently in a position of safety on a hill. Down a precipice of black rocks

the streams from the glacier shoot in long cascades. In another  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. the path crosses a furious waterfall, dashing down a lateral cleft from a glacier of the Sassièrè; and here the opposite mountain side is scored by white falls. The valley now opens, and on reaching a brow the traveller sees before him the basin of Brévières, and in the background the heights above the Col d'Iséran.

2 hrs. *Brévières* (Aub. Ogiéle). The course of the Isère has been diverted for the new carriage-road. Brévières is a miserable village, but in the midst of charming scenery. The river glides gently past it, and is full of trout; on the mountains are ptarmigan and blackcock. From the *Châlets of Marais*, some height to the S.W., Mr. Mathews in 1861 ascended the S. point of Mt. Pourri (called *Dôme de la Sache*), and the châteaux command a view of the chain of Mt. Blanc from the Bonhomme to the Géant. In the same direction the *Col de la Sachette* leads to the head of Val Peisey. Opposite the inn the old path to Tignes crosses the Isère, and ascends to a wild but beautiful forest of larch, spruce, and arolla pines, rising almost precipitously from a deep ravine. On the other side the rocks of marble have been blasted to form the carriage-road. This defile opens on the grassy basin (about 1 m. long) of

1 hr. *Tignes* (chez Révial, Florantin, much improved; chez Révial, David, H. du Club Alpin, fair quarters). Some height to the rt. a copious stream welling out from the mountain side rushes tumultuously down the rocks; to the l. a cluster of cascades descends from the Lac de la Sassièrè. The valley is here considerably expanded, and rich in pastures, and its inhabitants who are robust and independent, are great breeders of mules and cattle. Tignes is beautifully situated, 5415 ft. above the sea, at the foot of the

*Aiguille de la Sassièrè*, 12,323 ft. The summit was reached by Mr. W. Mathews in 1860, and commands a magnificent view of the

western Alps. It is not very properly called an *aiguille*, as the mountain consists of a long wall of precipices, crested with snow, which rises at the E. end in a dome. The ascent is free from all difficulty, and strongly recommended. Mr. Mathews ascended the W. buttress and passed along the top of the ridge to the dome, the highest point, in 6 hrs., from Tignes. It can also be climbed from the head of Val Grisanche.

Numerous high passes diverge from Tignes—to the Val Grisanche *Col de la Sassièrè*, and Col du Fond (Rte. 148)—to the Val de Rhêmes, the magnificent pass of the *Col de Guilletta* (Rte. 147A)—to the Val di Locana *Col de Gulèse* (Rte. 147)—to the Maurienne *Col d'Iséran* and *Col de Larossor*—to the valley of the Doron and Moutiers *Col du Palet*—to Val Peisey *Col de la Sachette*, and Col de la Tourne. Excursions may be made to the *Lac de Tignes*, 1 hr. W., famed for its trout, clear as crystal, and with beautiful view of the Grande Motte and Sassièrè; and to the Lac de la Sassièrè—about as far E.

[The ascent to the *Col de la Leisse* is by bridle-road to the *Lac de Tignes*. From châteaux, at the head of this lake, a track mounts S. of W. for the *Col du Palet*, leading to Val de Prémou. Another faintly-marked path enters a gorge to the l., and ascends due S. to the wild nearly level track of snow which forms the Col de la Leisse (about 9100 ft.). Chamois are here frequently seen. The descent lies through a glen, between slopes of débris, over which to the N. rises the magnificent peak of the *Grande Motte* (12,018 ft.), which can be reached without difficulty from the col (2½ hrs. up, 40 min. down). There is no path, but it is better to keep first to the rt. side, then to cross one of the snow-bridges which subsist through the summer, returning again to the northern side (though out of the direct course), if the traveller seek rest and refreshment at *Entre-deux-Eaux* (chez Rosaz, 2 beds, dear, chez Richard), 6 hrs. from Tignes, under

the *Grande Casse*. Thence the track to Lanslebourg lies over the Plan du Loup, as described Rte. 157. A guide is required for this route.]

Beyond Tignes the path to the Col d'Iséran enters another of those ravines, which in this valley so singularly alternate with the little plains. This, the last, separates the basin of Tignes from that of Laval. The forest trees are here stunted, the rocks denuded, and the whole passage between the villages is unmatched for savage wildness. To the l., at the entrance, copper has been found, and on the path will be noticed many beautiful marbles, of which specimens have been sent to Paris. Where the gorge begins to open, a fragile bridge crosses the torrent opposite precipices, on which the peasants believe, at this day, a dragon lives, and say he is the father of snakes found dead under the rocks. In another 10 min. the traveller finds himself in the plain of Laval, where barley is raised, and irrigation so well managed, that there is an appearance of luxuriant vegetation. A house built 1846 by a wealthy Savoyard for chamois hunting is passed, and then meadows traversed to

1½ hr. *Laval* (or *La Val de Tignes*)—(6 hrs. to *Entre Deux Eaux*) (*Inns*: chez *Bonnevie*, poor, but clean and moderate; *l'Union*),—the highest church village in the Val d'Isère, surrounded by lofty mountains, which are crested with snow and glaciers. Laval is centrally placed in a noble country, and only wants an improved inn. It is the point of departure for the Col d'Iséran and other passes, two of which have been already mentioned. 1. A path to the W., joining that from Tignes to the *Col de la Leisse*, descending to *Thermignon* by the N. branch of the *Doron* valley; 2. The *Col de Larossor* to *Thermignon*, by the S. branch of the same valley. 3. The *Col de Gâtse* to *Ceresole* (Rte. 147). 4. Several glacier passes to *Val de Rhêmes* (Rte. 147A).

From Laval by the *Col d'Iséran* to *Bonneval* is a walk of 4½ hrs.; to [*Switz.*]

*Lanslebourg* 8½ hrs. The path turning l. from Laval begins in 10 min. to ascend to the rt., by a stunted pine-forest. The path mounts at first in zigzags on the l. bank of the *Isère*, and may require a guide for some distance, as the course is confused by cattle-tracks, and the true path is only known by bearings. After gaining a grassy hollow, which runs up between rocky ridges about 2 m. direct to the col, the ascent is quite easy, with fine view, looking back, of the dark precipices of the *Sassière*, the *Grande Appareil* and *Ste. Hélène*. The *Mont Pourri*, *Grande Casse*, and *Grande Motte* are seen earlier on the ascent. The track is well marked by a line of stone pyramids, each of which has a niche that would afford some shelter in bad weather. The soil produces myriads of flowers, and of great variety. Some crosses mark the loss of life in these solitudes; in one instance by murder, in another a poor soldier was found dead from cold and exhaustion. On reaching the stone hut at the col (9086 ft.), a scene unsurpassed for savagery, but grand in the extreme, opens on the traveller. A chain of snow-peaks and glaciers stretch S.W. from the *Levanua*, by the *Cianarella* and *Pte. d'Albaron* to the *Chardonnet*. Directly E. of the col, some 1600 ft. above it, is a height of broken rocks (with a tremendous precipice on the E.), which occupies the site of a fictitious mountain, the *Mont Iséran*, figuring in the official map of *Piedmont* as a peak of 13,271 ft. above the sea, though, in point of fact, the *Mont Iséran* is no more a mountain than the *Mont Cenis*, *Monte Moro*, and other passes so called, and the fallacy is supposed to have arisen from imperfect observations of the *Grand Paradis*, *Levanua*, and *Sassière*, which from certain points of view might be supposed to occupy this position. That no peak approaching such a height is to be found within several miles of the Col d'Iséran, was ascertained by 3 distinguished members of the Alpine Club, Messrs. Cowell, W. Mathews, and Tuckett.

From the col, the course lies to the rt. down steep denuded slopes to an elevated valley, which terminates in a defile, where a cataract falls to the rt. of the path. From this ravine the descent is rough to the pasturages of S. Barthélemi.

From these pasturages the descent is extremely steep. The track bearing to the rt. descends in zigzags to

*Bonneval* (5760 ft.), a grim and miserable place, consisting of a church and rather large collection of dirty stone hovels. One of these wretched dens at the E. end is the *Inn* (chez Culet, an intelligent chasseur), with one room (and a clean bed), but Culet gives up his own (with well-filled bookshelves) if wanted. Tolerable quarters for a mountaineer. The valley is exceedingly wild, and a little above the village presents a most extraordinary scene of ruin, called the *Chapier de Fodun*, where an older Bonneval is said to lie buried beneath the rocks. The highest peak of the three-headed *Levanna*, at the headwaters of the Arc, is 11,943 ft. above the sea, and the *Chardonnet*, between it and the Mt. *Cenis*, 12,336 ft. Most of these summits slope westward from glaciers, and terminate towards the E. in precipices. W. of the *Levanna* are the *Uja di Ciamarella* and *Pointe d'Albaron*, both over 12,000 ft. [From Bonneval the ascent of the *Chardonnet* or *Charbonel* (12,336 ft.), the highest peak in this neighbourhood, may be made. The distance is shorter from *La Goulaz*, at opening of Val d'Avérole where, however, there is no inn (5½ hrs. up, 2½ hrs. down). The range is crossed by several high passes to the Val d'Orco, and the 3 valleys of the *Stura* (Val Grande, Val d'Ala, Val Viù, see Rte. 156A). 1. *Col de Carro* to Cérésôle. 2. *Col de Girard*, passing immediately S. of the E. summit of the *Levanna*, in 6 hrs. to *Groscauallo*, and in 4½ hrs. further to *Lanzo*. 3. *Col de Séa*, in 9 hrs. to *Groscauallo*, a longer route, lying for 3 hrs. over glacier. The scenery of the *Col de Séa* is finer than that of *Col Girard*, but the view from the top not so

extensive. 2 hrs. to the Gl. des Eivettes, between the *Albaron* and *Ciamarella*, and up the ice for 1½ hr. Down by the Gl. de Séa and rocks. 4. *Col de Collerin* to Ala. 5. *Col d'Arnaz* to Viù; the two last by the Val d'Avérole from Bessans.

It is about 8 hrs. to Cérésôle by the *Col de Carro*. The track mounts N. of E. from the last hamlet *Ecot*, reaching in 2½ hrs. the source of the *Arc* (about 9000 ft.), which flows out in considerable volume from the rocky ground. Thence N.E. to the col (10,292 ft.) W. of the *Levanna*. The descent on the Italian side is steeper, and over a badly crevassed glacier to the alp, where, near a small lake, it falls in with the path from the *Col de Galese*.

The path to the *Col de Girard* diverges rt. from the *Carro* track under the *Levanna*, and ascends a secluded glen and glacier to the col. The descent is by a long snow-slope and steep track down cliffs.

1½ hr. below Bonneval the glen expands, and a broad valley, dotted with hamlets extends to *Lansiebourg*. In the distance are seen the forests about Mt. *Cenis*: to the l. is the Val d'Avérole, between the *Chardonnet* on the W., the *P'te. d'Albaron* on the E., and a view through the opening of glaciers, over which passes lead to Val d'Ala and Val di Viù. In another 20 min. the path reaches

*Bessans* (*Aub.* chez *Garinot*, at the W. end, near the river), another but larger village of long stone huts. The church, on a height, has a musical peal of bells. The dark blue dresses worn by the women on a Sunday are so made as to give great apparent breadth of shoulder. Kerchiefs and aprons gaily worked in flowers, and white caps, complete the costume. From here the *Roche Melon* may be ascended (Rte. 154). The women ride two together, astride, upon donkeys, which are here the common beast of burden, and are salted and eaten when too old for work. A little beyond the village is the opening of the Val de *Ribou*. [By the *Val d'Avérole* three

passes lead into the Piedmontese valleys of Ala and Viù. 1. The *Col du Collerin*, to Ala in 6½ hrs.; thence to Lanzo, 3 hrs. 2. The *Col d'Arnaz*, a very ancient passage, with remains of a paved track, now partly covered with snow and ice, and some Roman inscriptions, in 9 hrs. from Bessans to Viù, and from thence, by char-road, in 2 hrs. to Lanzo. 3. The *Col de l'Autaret*, a longer but easier route to Viù in 12 hrs. (see next Rte.)]

At Bessans the Arc is crossed, and some way farther a ridge is passed which divides that commune from

*Lans le Villard*, about a league above Lanslebourg. From this village a path leads into the great route of the Mont Cenis. If the traveller has started early, he may reach the post-house on the mountain on the day of his departure from Laval.

*Lanslebourg* (Rte. 154).

## ROUTE 156A.

### THE VALLEYS OF LANZO—VAL GRANDE —VAL D'ALA—VAL DE VIÙ.

These valleys, although as easy of access from Turin as those of the Vaudois, have been almost entirely neglected by English travellers, owing in part to the difficult character of the passes over the main chain to which they lead (Rte. 156). There are, however, many pleasant paths between the various glens on the Italian side of the chain; and a rough mule-path connects the Val Grande with the Bugni di Ceresole in Val d'Orco, one of the best head-quarters in the Graian Alps. The whole district abounds in rich and beautiful scenery, and the peaks (three of over 12,000 ft.) and glaciers of the main range between the Roche Melon and the Levanna deserve the attention of mountaineers. 'Le Valli de Lanzo' (with map), published at Turin by the Marchese L. Clavarino, 1874, will be found useful as a local handbook.

From Turin, a rly., starting from a small station N. of the town, runs

through a rich level country, with fine views of the Alps, to 18½ m.

*Lanzo* (Inns: A. di Posta, fair), a country town, 1500 ft., 2625 Inhab., beautifully situated at the foot of the Alps, in the corner where they bend eastwards. An excursion may be made to the Ponte del Diavolo, a remarkable bridge of a single arch across the Stura, built in 1378. On a rocky point, 1600 ft. above the town, is a church dedicated to St. Ignatius.

[There are rough mule-passes to Locana in Val d'Orco by the richly-wooded *Val di Tesso* in 7-8 hrs.]

The three valleys which unite above Lanzo are known as the Valle Grande, the Valle d'Ala, and the Valle di Viù. The Valle Grande is the northernmost.

### Val Grande.

From Lanzo, a good road runs along the l. bank of the Stura. The opening of the Val di Viù is soon passed, and opposite Ceres that of the Val d'Ala.

*Ceres*, 9 m. from Lanzo (2337 ft.), is the principal village of the valleys (Albero Fiorito, fair). The sanctuary of Santa Christina on a neighbouring rock (4549 ft.) commands beautiful views.

[Locana may be reached hence in 6 hrs. by the *Col della Pierra Scritta*, or Ceresole in 8 hrs., by the *Col della Crocetta*. Both are rough passes, barely passable for mules.]

In ascending Val Grande it is not necessary to turn aside to Ceres, the carriage-road goes on on the rt. side of the valley to *Procuria*. Hence a mule-path mounts gently through an open-wooded valley to (6 m.)

*Chialamberto* (two tolerable Inns). 2 m. further is Bonzo, overshadowed by steep hills. The snowy range at the head of the valley comes into sight, and the green but bare pastoral basin of Groscavallo opens.

*Groscavallo* (3609 ft.), 10 miles from Ceres, is a cluster of hamlets. At the highest of these, *Forno-Alpi-Graie*, is a rough Inn, lately much

improved. Guides may be found here. On the S. side of the valley is the sanctuary of La Madonna del Gros-cavallo, surrounded by a grove of beech and plane trees, the remnant of the noble forests which, as old documents prove, once clothed the head of the valley.

[To the N. the *Col della Piccola*, a rough mule-pass of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  hrs., leads to Ceresole. When travellers learn the attractions of these valleys, this pass will come into notice as the natural link between them and the central Graians.]

Two glens unite at Forno. Through the northern the mountaineer may climb to the *Col de Girard* (10,154 ft.), a glacier pass by which it is  $7\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. to Bonneval, at the head of the valley of the Arc. The southern glen leads to the somewhat more difficult, but, on the whole, more attractive *Col de Séu* (10,154 ft.), by which the valley of the Arc is reached in 9 hrs. (see also Rte. 156).

A steep pass, known as the *Ghiwet de Séu* (9,025 ft.), leads from the chalets of Séa to those of Mussa in Val d'Ala.

The three-peaked *Levanna* (11,942 ft.) can be climbed from the Col de Girard by fair mountaineers. For all these passes good guides are necessary, and a man with local knowledge desirable.

### Val d'Ala.

Val d'Ala is the narrowest and wildest of the three valleys of Lanzo. From Ceres a narrow char-road leads up the valley as far as Villard, beyond Ala. It is about 6 m. through a singularly picturesque rocky defile to the principal commune

*Ala* (3549 ft.).

About 1 m. higher is *Mondrone* (4205 ft.), with an *Inn*. This hamlet was "a few years ago" overwhelmed in an avalanche, which buried all but the church tower; digging a passage to this the inhabitants escaped. Near here is the Borne di Mondrone, a fine waterfall, where the Stura leaps into a profound chasm.

Above Mondrone the valley appears to be closed by a steep barrier. An hour's ascent by a good path leads to a level plain beyond it, in which stands *La Balme* (4900 ft.), an *Inn*. The green flowery Alpine meadows form a foreground to the snowy peak of *Uja (Aiguille) de Bessans*. It is easy to ascend the valley to the glacier at its extreme head, passing the chalets of Mussa and the Alp of Naressa.

The *Col du Collerin* (10,625 ft.) is an ordinary glacier pass. It takes its name from a steep gully, or *couloir*, on the Italian side, where the axe is sometimes useful. It is a walk of 8 hrs. by it to Avérole on the Savoy side.

The *Ciamarella* or *Pointe de Séa* (11,500 ft.) may be ascended from La Balme. The *Pic d'Albaron* (12,014 ft.) (*Ponte de Chalanson* of French map) is accessible from the Col du Collerin.

### Val di Viù.

The road to Viù crosses the Stura by the *Ponte di Germagnano*,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. from Lanzo. After passing the junction of the stream, the road constantly ascends beside the Stura di Viù, through pleasing scenery. The peak of the Roche Melon is seen in the background. Two hours' drive (10 m.) from Lanzo is

*Viù (Inn: Corona Grossa*, fair, and others) (2567 ft.), a large village, with many villas in the Swiss style, frequented by Turinese during the season of *villeggiatura*. Here the carriage-road ends.

Above Viù a good mule-track mounts through fine scenery. The *Church of Lemie* stands out picturesquely on a rock in the centre of the valley. After passing the chalets of *Salette*, the valley is for a time steeper and narrower, and then suddenly opens out. The traveller sees before him a fertile plain some 4 m. long. The slopes are sparsely covered with the remnants of an ancient forest, and in the background rises an imposing mountain chain.

The numerous hamlets scattered over the plain have each a name, but are collectively known as

*Usseglio* (4215 ft.) (no *Inn*). The valley here splits into two glens. The N.W. branch leads to the rough but easy pass of the *Col d' Arnaz*, and thus to Avérole, in the valley of the Arc, in 8 to 9 hrs. from Usseglio. The ascent lies up two steep rocky barriers.

The S. glen leads to the easier pass of the *Col de l'Autaret* (10,115 ft.), once practicable for mules. Two hrs. above Usseglio are the *Châlets of Malciaussia* (5896 ft.); under the Roche Melon, which may be climbed from them by a steep direct route, or by the *Col della Croce di Ferro*—a pass to Susa at its E. base—in 6 hrs. To Avérole by the *Col de l'Autaret* is a walk of 6½ hrs. A guide is requisite for these passes.

## ROUTE 157.

MOUTIERS TARENTEISE TO LANSLEBOURG, BY THE COL DE LA VANOISE.

*Moûtiers* (*Inn*: Couronne). Rte. 156. Char-road as far as Pralognan, beyond it is necessary to take a horse, or proceed on foot. This pass may be performed in one long day, 10½ hrs.' steady walking without halts.

The road passes the old *Salines* of Moûtiers (Rte. 156), and ascending the rt. bank of the Doron, reaches in a ½ hr. the Rock of Salins, opposite the confluence of the valley of Bozel, or the Doron, with that of Belleville. The latter leads to St. Michel by the *Col des Encombres*, and its tributary valley, the Nantbrun, to St. Jean de Maurienne, by the *Col de la Platière* (Rte. 154); either an easy day's journey.

[There are two little known passes, *Col de Péolet* and *Col de la Montée du Finel*, leading through the Combe des Allues in 11 hrs. to St. Michel. To E. of these passes lies a little known glacier mass, of which the highest summit (first climbed in 1878) is the

*Aig. de Péolet* (11,700 ft.). A lofty pass (*Col de Gébrondas*) leads between this peak and the *Aig. de Polset* from Brides to Modane or St. Michel.]

The *Château de Salins* was anciently the residence of the archbishop of the Tarentaise. Its ruins are immediately above the salt springs, which are guarded with great care, to prevent the country people stealing any of the water, and making their own salt!

*Salins* is supposed to be the site of the ancient Darentasia. The town was almost destroyed about the end of the 14th century, by a fall from the mountains on the W., and subsequent falls destroyed what remained except the castle, and this has been since demolished. To judge by the threatening appearance of the rocks the few miserable houses, rebuilt around the Salines, seem destined to a similar fate.

The castle remained long after the destruction of the town in the 14th century. Books printed by Maurice Mermillon at the château very soon after the discovery of printing still exist, and it is supposed that the first press in Savoy was established here, and that Mermillon was the Caxton of the Tarentaise.

Salins lies S. of Moûtiers. From the confluence, the road into the valley of Bozel takes an easterly direction through a beautiful district rich in wood and highly cultivated.

*Brides-les-Bains*, *Brida*, or *La Perrière*, 4 m. from Moûtiers. (*Inns*: *Etablissement des Bains*, best, and good; 2 tables-d'hôte, and a reading-room: there are other inns.) This pretty watering-place, at the junction of the valleys of Allues and Bozel, is resorted to in summer for its mineral springs, and affords by far the best head-quarters for exploring this part of Savoy. The waters are so impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen as to be detestable to the taste. Their temperature, according to Dr. Socquet, is 99½°.

The views are extremely fine, and the neighbourhood abounds in beau-

tiful walks; one of the pleasantest is by a footpath through the wood at a considerable height above the S. bank of the stream, towards Moultiers. The lateral valleys of the Doron are full of beautiful scenery, particularly in the valley of Allues, and at the chalets of Châtelet, near the Col de Forclaz, whence Mont Blanc can be seen, and a vast extent of the peaks of the great chain. From Brides carriage-roads lead by either bank of Doron in 4 m. to

*Bozel* (2 Inns), where the Val Rivière falls in from the S. Between the two villages the valley is richly cultivated, and above cornfields and orchards are pine-forests, snows and glaciers. The valley is closed at the head by the mountains of Peisey and by the beautiful peak of Mont Pourri.

A short distance beyond Bozel the valley forks. The main branch of the Doron issues from the valley of Pralognan, while the other less considerable stream descends from the *Val de Prémou* nearly due E. of Bozel. [Half an hour above the point where the road turns S. to Pralognan is *Champagny*, 3 m. from Bozel, at the opening of the Val de Prémou. It takes about 5½ hrs.' steady walking to reach a sort of plateau at the head of this valley, on which are several small lakes, of which that nearest the summit is called *Lac de Graton*. From this point, by turning first N., and then descending N.W., the traveller may reach the mines of Peisey (Rte. 156). The direct course to the rt. of the lake, a little N. of E., leads by the *Col du Palet* to Tignes.]

The road to Pralognan passes the village of *Villard Göttréux*, built at the junction of the 2 branches of the Doron. A char may be taken the whole way; but no time will be saved, as the road is steep, and the old track keeping nearer the stream is more interesting. On the rt. there is a cataract, formed by the fall of the Doron into the gorge at Bellentre. Above it the valley widens to the

beautiful meadows and calm retirement of the valley of Pralognan.

*Pralognan*, embosomed in pine-forests, over which rise the precipices of the *Rechasse*, is a most picturesque spot. It has a small, but fair *Inn*, that of Favre, kept by civil people, at the hamlet of Le Barioz, the next above the church tower. As elsewhere in the Tarentaise, there is confusion as to the names of the mountains. That of the *Aiguille de la Vanoise* appears in many works, but does not seem to be known in the country. The pass leading to Lanslebourg is called *Col de la Vanoise*, and the tract of glacier to the south of it the *Glacier de la Vanoise*. The highest peak in this part of Savoy lies N. of the Col de Vanoise, between Pralognan and the Val de Prémou; it is called in the country the *Grande Cusse*, or more frequently *Pointe des Grands Contoirs*, and is probably the point which has been measured as the *Aiguille de la Vanoise*. The height is 12,670 ft.

[Two passes lead from Pralognan to the valley of the Arc, more direct, but higher and more difficult, than the Col de la Vanoise. Both are approached by following the Doron to the chalets of La Motte. A little above them the valley divides; the l.-hand ravine leads in 6 hrs. by the *Col d'Aussois* (or Col de Rosoire), about 9600 ft., over some considerable snow-fields to Aussois, above Fort L'Esseillon (Rte. 154). The scenery on both sides is very fine, and near the last chalets on the N. side there is a magnificent view of Mont Blanc. The pass which lies at the head of the rt. or W. branch of the Doron is the *Col de Chevière*, or *Charvière*, about 9100 ft. high, and leading direct to Modane.]

The ascent from Pralognan to the Col de la Vanoise is very wild and picturesque. In about an hour a green valley with a group of chalets, called La Glière de Pralognan, is reached. A sharp pinnacle of rock, called in French map *Aig. de la Vanoise*, is seen

in the centre of the ridge in the direction of the col. It is possible to pass on either side of this, but the regular track passes to the N. of it. The ascent is rough, in part over moraine. From the summit there is a fine view of the *Grande Casse*, ascended for the first time in 1860 by Mr. W. Mathews. It is accessible in 4 or  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. and commands a wonderful view. The track on both sides of the col is marked by poles, and in good weather a mountaineer will scarcely require a guide. Near the top are 3 little lakes, the source of streams which descend on one side to the Doron, and on the other to the Arc. On the right, enormous glaciers extend to the *Roche Chevrère*, the mountain which is seen from the Mont Cenis road, over Thermignon.

The descent towards *Entre-deux-Eaux* is rapid. The long sterile valley above these chalets leads by the Col de la Leisse to Tignes, in the Val d'Isère (Rte. 156), in about 6 hrs. from Pralognan. [The *Grande Motte* (12,018 ft.), rising in graceful sweeps of snow W. of the Col de la Leisse, can be ascended from *Entre-deux-Eaux* in 6 hrs., or in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. up and down from the col. The rte. is by a series of snow-slopes and the E. or N. arêtes.] After a long descent the torrent is crossed, but, instead of pursuing its course through the impassable gorge to Thermignon, a path is followed up the opposite mountain to the *Plan du Loup*, or *Plan des Laux*, a pasturage, not so wild or high, but about the breadth of the Col de Vanoise. The scene, looking back upon the valley of *Entre-deux-Eaux* and the Col de la Vanoise, is very grand.

On the col of the *Plan du Loup* another small lake is passed, then a long descent to the hamlet of Ste. Marguerite commences. Below this place the path enters a pine-forest, in which are the striking rocky obelisks known as *Rocs du Pelvoz*, through which a rough road leads down to the valley above Thermignon, into which there are some magnificent peeps. There is still, however, a long descent before that

little town can be reached in about 3 hrs. from *Entre-deux-Eaux*. There is a path from Ste. Marguerite, skirting the Mont Parouffa, behind Lanslebourg, and leading directly to the latter town; but, though shorter, it is even more fatiguing than the route to Thermignon, and one which it is difficult to pass with a laden mule. From Thermignon an hour takes the traveller, by the great route of the Mont Cenis, to

Lanslebourg. (Rte. 154.)

### ROUTE 158.

FROM ST. JEAN DE MAURIENNE TO BOURG D'OISANS, BY THE COL D'ARVES AND THE COL DU PRÉ NOUVEAU.

By starting very early from St. Jean it would be possible to reach Bourg d'Oisans the same day; but as it is a long journey of 14 leagues, it is better to pass the night at *St. Jean d'Arves* (a fair *Inn*), a small village situated in the Val d'Arvan which joins the valley of the Arc at St. Jean de Maurienne.

[From St. Jean d'Arves the snowy range of the *Grandes Rousses* can be conveniently explored (guides C. and J. B. Bellet.)]

A steep mule-track leads to the village of *Fontcouverte* and then rt. to *Villarambert*, where the traveller turns S.E., or l., and after a short descent crosses a small tributary of the Arvan, and then mounts some steep grassy slopes to the *Col d'Arves*,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from St. Jean de Maurienne. In another  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. he descends to *St. Jean d'Arves*, locally known as *La Tour*, where there is a rough *Inn*. The Col d'Arves might be avoided by following the course of the Arvan; but that stream makes a great détour to the l. between *Fontcouverte* and *St. Jean d'Arves*. The route beyond leads nearly due S. over wide and luxuriant pastures in 4 hrs. from St. Jean d'Arves to the old frontier between Savoy and France at the point called the *Col du Pré Nouveau*,

7717 ft. above the sea, a little to the E. of the great mountain masses of *Les Grandes Rousses*. [Either of the two highest peaks (11,395 ft.) may be reached in 7 or 8 hrs. from St. Jean, and descent may be made to Bourg d'Oisans, which is a more convenient starting-point (Rte. 159). The view from the summit is very extensive, and well rewards the labour of the ascent, which is quite free from difficulty to mountaineers.] The path then descends through pastures even more luxuriant than those of the Maurienne, by the side of a tributary of the Romanche; and after mounting the ridge on the bank of this river, comes down upon *Besse*, a miserable and filthy village about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from the Col; and then, passing through *Mizoën*, hits the great road a little above *Freney*, which is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from Besse, and where there is tolerable accommodation. From Freney to Bourg d'Oisans is a 2 hrs.' walk,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  m. If, however, the traveller be bound for the Vallon du Vénéon, it is better not to go to Bourg, but proceed from Freney to *Vénos*, by the col of the same name, a journey of about 3 hrs. Almost all the way from St. Jean de Maurienne to Vénos the mountains are composed of a black argillaceous shale, which doubtless produces the luxuriance of vegetation.

From St. Jean d'Arves another pass, the *Col de l'Infernet* (8826 ft.), commanding a superb view of the Meije range, leads to La Grave on the Lautaret road, about 18 m. above Bourg.

#### ROUTE 158A.

ST. MICHEL TO THE COL DU LAUTARET, BY VALLOIRE AND THE COL DU GALIBIER.

This important carriage-road, made for military purposes, will probably be completed in 1880. The only portion still unfinished is the steep ascent (2 hrs.) from St. Michel.

A very steep mule-path through

pleasant woods and meadows, commanding fine views of the ranges beyond the Arc and the glaciers of the Péclet "massif," climbs the hillside S. of St. Michel to the chapel of the Trois Croix (fine view of Aigs. d'Arve and Ecrins), whence a path descends to Valloire in about 3 hrs. from St. Michel. Twenty minutes below the chapel the new road bears away to the rt. before traversing by a short tunnel the crest\* dividing the Arc valley from the Combe de Valloire. This, in its lower portion, is a deep and savage gorge. Terraces cut in very steep hillsides lead to a shoulder, whence the road, joining that from the chapel at Le Clos, descends gently into the fertile village-studded basin of Valloire, 4692 ft. (à la Jeune France, chez Martin, tolerable, but dear; a second *Inn*, at lower end of village, tolerable).

Above Valloire the road follows the bottom of a stern and stony valley, passing first the opening of a glen leading up to the bold peaks of the Aiguilles d'Arve, and then the glen which leads to the Col du Goleón.

The *Aiguilles d'Arve*, three sharp rock pinnacles (highest 11,529 ft.), have all yielded to the assaults of Mr. Coolidge. There is a pass between the N. and central Aiguille by which the head of the valley of the Arvan is reached. The descent is through a couloir, and over steep slopes of rocks and shale, sometimes early in the season well covered with snow. From La Saussaz, chalets at base of Col La Grave may be reached by Col Lombard.

[By the *Col du Goleón*, said (Joanne) to be practicable for horses, and commanding from the summit a glorious view, La Grave may be reached in  $6\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from Valloire.]

The ascent to the Col du Galibier becomes steep at La Charmette (whence there is a mule-pass, *Col de la Ponsonnière*, to Monestier). After several zigzags, the upper pasturages are attained, but it is some time before the final ridge comes into sight. The road mounts to it by more zigzags. Near the summit the botanist will find many rare plants,

The *Col du Galibier* (French map 8721 ft.) is the second in height of all Alpine carriage-roads, being only inferior to the Stelvio. It commands a superb view of the Dauphiné Alps; Monte Viso and Mont Blanc are also visible. A long but easy descent leads to the road of the Col du Lautaret, a mile below the Hospice.

From Valloire to the Lautaret hospice is about 6 hrs. walking. It is doubtful whether any carriage would now be found at Valloire, but it would be possible to drive from Monestier to that village in the opposite direction.

### ROUTE 159.

GRENOBLE TO BRIANÇON, BY BOURG D'OISANS AND THE COL DU LAUTARET.

| Grenoble.                 | Miles.   |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Vizille . . . . .         | 11       |
| Bourg d'Oisans . . . . .  | 19       |
| Le Freney . . . . .       | 6½       |
| Le Dauphin . . . . .      | 2        |
| La Grave . . . . .        | 8½       |
| Col du Lautaret . . . . . | 6        |
| Monestier . . . . .       | 6        |
| Briançon . . . . .        | 8½       |
|                           | <hr/> 68 |

This road skirts the N. and E. sides of the *Dauphiné Alps*, or group of *Mont Pelvoux*, and abounds in grand and romantic scenery.

*Grenoble* (Gratianopolis), the chief city in the Dépt. de l'Isère, beautifully situated at the confluence of the Isère and Drac (Pop. 40,484), is described in the *Handbook for France*. (Inns: H. de l'Europe, good and moderate; H. Monnet; Trois Dauphins; H. des Ambassadeurs.) Maisonville, bookseller and publisher, keeps all works of local interest and good photographs.

Courier every day at 1 P.M. to Briançon takes 4 or 5 passengers. Diligence during the summer to Bourg in 5 or 6 hrs., whence to Briançon takes 8 or 10 hrs. Conveyance very dear. Grenoble to Susa 220 fr. Car from Bourg to Briançon, 8 or 10 hrs., a long and

heavy day, 50 fr. The pedestrian may walk from Bourg to Briançon in 13 hrs., and the scenery will amply repay him.

[A rte. may be followed over the mountains to Bourg by the *Baths of Uriage* (Inns: H. du Cercle; H. Grand; and many others), a very popular watering-place (1358 ft.), with several excursions, one of which is the ascent of the *Croix de Belledonne*, 9780 ft. From this mountain descent can be made to the Combe d'Olle, which opens into the Lautaret road 5 m. from Bourg.]

There is now a railway from Grenoble to Gap, whence there is a road to Briançon (along which a railway will be shortly constructed); but the distance by this route is 50 m. further, and through a country generally uninteresting, whilst that by the Col du Lautaret abounds in the finest scenery. To save this distance, Napoleon commenced in 1808 the road by this pass, and many magnificent works were constructed upon it, but after his abdication it was abandoned, and it was only completed in 1861. The bridges were destroyed by the floods in May, 1856. It lies for the most part through the valley of the Romanche. For some distance from Grenoble it traverses a plain, through avenues, to the village of *La Chaur*, where there is a remarkable bridge of a single arch, built away from the original course of the Drac, which was diverted to it. The road thence continues up the banks of the Romanche to

*Vizille*, an old town, with 3929 Inhab., now a stat. on the Gap railway. Its Inns are wretched. It is considered as the cradle of the first French revolution, for here the parliament of Dauphiné first made a declaration fatal to the power of the Bourbons. The *Château*, now the property of the Périer family, was re-built 1610-23 by the constable Lesdiguières, and restored by M. Périer, the brother of the minister, who

established the cotton-spinning and calico-printing works. In 1825 and 1865 it was partly destroyed by fire.

The road ascends the right bank of the Romanche through the narrow, but beautiful and well-wooded *Combe de Gavet*, which runs with nearly the same wild character into the heart of the mountains, between the *Belledonne*, N., and *Tuillefer*, S. In some places it widens enough for the establishment of a village or a hamlet: of these, *Séchilienne* (whence the *Tuillefer*, 9387 ft., is easily accessible), *Gavet*, and *Livet* are the principal. Near Gavet there are iron-works. This remarkable ravine or combe, which is also an English or rather Celtic name for a valley, extends from Vizille to Bourg d'Oisans. It is within record that a large lake was formed in the basin of Bourg, in the 12th century, by the falling of a mountain into this narrow gorge. A vast heap of earth and rocks dammed the river, and the waters accumulated in a lake, of which the surface was 3 leagues long, and 1 wide, and the depth from 60 to 80 ft. This existed for about 200 years, but in September, 1219, it burst its barrier, swept away in its fury everything that it touched, rapidly passed into the Drac and Isère, then, flowing over the plain below the two rivers, submerged a great part of Grenoble. At the village of *Sables* the valley turns at a rt. angle S., and is joined from the N. by the Combe d'Olle, which runs up to the group of mountains called *Les Grandes Rousses* (Rte. 158). It is exceedingly prolific in ores. From here the *Grand Pic de Belledonne* is accessible in 7 or 8 hrs. (very fine view). On Mont Chalanches, above *Allemont* (the chief village, with a fair *Inn*), traces of gold and silver and several other metals have been found, and ancient iron-mines are in full activity. From the head of this valley the Sept Laux (Seven Lakes), the Baths of Alleverd (Rte. 154), or La Chambre on the Mt. Cenis road may be reached. 5 m. from Sables is

*Bourg d'Oisans* (H. de Milan, pretty

good; H. de France, rebuilt; mules and carriages may be hired), situate on the l. bank of the river, 2380 ft. above the sea, on a mountain-girt plain, from which precipices of purple shale and grey limestone rise to a height of 1000 ft. To the W., on the face of these cliffs, are the *gold mines of Gardette*, which have been worked from an early period, and above them the small *Glacier de Villard Eymond* with pass to Le Périer on the Col d'Ornon road. The vegetation of the valley is remarkably rich; and the cliffs exhibit in some places extraordinary instances of tortuous stratification. On approaching Bourg, the lofty pastures of the Mont de Lans, not yet visible, and its great glacier, close the head of the valley, and divide the torrent issuing from the dark gorge of the Vénéon from that of the Romanche, which flows from the defile of l'Internet.

[From Bourg a carriage-road, abounding in fine scenery, leads in about 28 m. by Col d'Ornon to La Mure.]

This is a starting-point for the exploration of the *Dauphiné Alps*, and other excursions can be made to the Combe d'Olle or *Les Grandes Rousses*.

The latter group of mountains lies to the N.E., extends about 8 m., and rises in 2 peaks to 11,395 ft. The highest and most northerly, called *Le Grand Sauvage*, was ascended by Messrs. Mathews and Bonney in 1863, by the *Glacier de la Cochette* on the N.W. side. It can be reached without difficulty from St. Jean d'Arve (Rte. 158), but is best climbed from the hut near the *Lac de la Furc* above Bourg. The S. peak, slightly lower, is accessible from both sides. Both summits command very extensive views. A fine excursion may be made to the *Lac Blanc* on S.W. flank of the group in 4 hrs., and a descent can be made to Frenay. The path crosses the bridge at Bourg and ascends N. to the village of Huez.

The *Dauphiné Alps*, of which the northern flank rises superbly some 8000 ft. above the valley of Bourg, attain their greatest height about

the centre in the *Pointe des Ecrins*, 13,462 ft.

These mountains, formerly known as the *Mont Pelvoux* group, because that peak was long supposed to be the highest point, occupy an extensive district between the rivers Durance, Romanche, and Drac, and attain an elevation nearly 1000 ft. above that of *Monte Viso*, the summit of the neighbouring Cottian Alps. As a chain they are extremely irregular, and their deep and tortuous valleys descend towards every point of the compass. Several of the chief summits, however, are arranged in a line running N. and S. Upon this, commencing at the N.W., are the splendid peaks of the *Meije*, or *Aig. du Midi de la Grave*, 13,081 ft., *Le Râteau*, 12,317 ft., and then come *La Grande Ruine*, 12,317 ft., the *Roche Faurio*, 12,192 ft., and the *Pointe des Ecrins*, the highest peak of the range, and, before the annexation of Mont Blanc, in France, 13,462 ft. S. of this pre-eminent point are the *Crête de la Bérarde*, 12,468 ft., and the *Pic d'Ailefroide*, 12,989 ft. (correctly *Aléfroide*), a magnificent pyramid of rock, as black as night, and with precipices which rival those of the Matterhorn. To the E. of the *Ailefroide* are the *Crête du Pelvoux*, 12,845 ft., and *Mont Pelvoux*, 12,973 ft. From the extremities of this chain, snowy ranges extend W., including the *Pic d'Olm* (11,739 ft.), a grand rocky peak, very difficult of access, and from the centre, just N. of Les Ecrins, the graceful *Montagne des Agniaux* (12,008 ft.) to the E. In these are the sources of the Romanche. From Les Ecrins a shorter ridge, the *Crête de l'Encula*, 12,399 ft., stretches eastward, and separates two great ice-fields—the *Glacier Blanc* on the N., the *Glacier Noir* on the S.

[An excursion can be made to *La Bérarde*, at the foot of Les Ecrins, by the Vallon du Vénéon, which from Bourg appears to be the continuation of the valley of the Romanche. There is a carriage-road nearly as far as *Venosc* (several *luns*, chez Balme), 8 m., where mules may be obtained,

From Venosc a traveller who is going to the Col du Lautaret can cross the *Col de l'Alpe* or *de Venosc* in 3 hrs. to Freney or Le Dauphin, and save the détour by Bourg d'Oisans. It is a beautiful walk, and to a botanist most interesting, as the alp is singularly rich in flowering plants. It passes to the W. of the great *Glacier du Mont de Lans*, a conspicuous feature in all views of this group of mountains from the N. It stretches E. nearly 6 m., in a billowy plateau, from a peak called the *Jandri* to the *Râteau*, sloping gently to ice-falls which overhang the Combe de Malaval. By the *Col du Jandri* it can be crossed in 11 hrs. from St. Christophe to Freney, from which place to the valley of the Arc is the pass of the *Col du Pré Nouveau* (Rte. 158).

At *St. Christophe* (chez Turc; 3 beds. Here live the two best guides in the district, Gaspard père et fils). 2 hrs., the wild Val du Diable (or Vallon de la Selle) falls in from the E., and leads in 10½ hrs. by the glacier pass of the *Col de la Selle* (called by the natives *de la Lauze*) to La Grave.

The remote *Val Joffrey* may be reached hence through the Combes de la Mariande or de l'Enchâtra.

From St. Christophe, M. Cordier, in 1876, made the first ascent of the *Aiguille du Plat* (11,818 ft.), sleeping at the *Chalets de la Selle*. The ascent may be made direct from St. Christophe, in 6 or 7 hrs. View, the finest in the district. Mr. Coolidge, in 1876, crossed by little-known passes to Le Désert, in Val Joffrey, ascending on the way the *Aiguille des Arias* (11,159 ft.), and, in 1875, to the almost unknown Valse-nestre by the difficult Col du Vallon de l'Enchâtra.

A little higher up (about 1 hr.) another branch runs S. to the *Col de la Muande*, approached by a glacier on the N. side, but with an easy descent to Riou du Sap in Val Godemar (9 hrs.).

The main valley, now turning E., presents an extraordinary scene of ruin. A mountain has fallen, and the path, rising in some places like a staircase, winds through a chaos of

rocks. The Pointe des Ecrins is now a magnificent object at the head of the valley. In about 3 hrs. from St. Christophe the traveller reaches the hamlet of

*La Bélarde*, 5702 ft. (*Aub.* kept by the Rodiers, improved, 6 clean beds, fair food, bad wine), which for savage grandeur of scenery may vie with any village in the Alps. Shut in by granite cliffs, it stands at the junction of the valleys of La Pilatte and Etançons, under the Glacier de la Bonne Pierre, which streams down between *Les Ecrins* and the *Roche Faurio* (12,192 ft.). Rt. and l. of *Les Ecrins* a range of rock peaks, the back-bone of the group, extends; N. by the *Faurio*, the *Tête de Charrière* and *Grande Ruine* to the *Meije*; S. by the *Crête de la Bélarde* to the fine peak of the *Ailefroide* (12,989 ft.), which rises W. of *Mt. Pelvour*. Many high passes lead from *La Bélarde* (Rte 160)].

From Bourg d'Oisans to Briançon, a distance of 38½ m., is easily accomplished in the day in a char, changing at *La Grave*.

About 3 m. beyond Bourg the road reaches the end of the plain, at the confluence of the Vénéon with the Romanche, and, crossing the Pont S. Guillerme, enters the gorge of *L'Infernet*, shut in by nearly vertical rocks of gneiss. It is carried along the l. bank, and high above the torrent on terraces and through tunnels, of which one, a fine engineering work, is 234 yds. in length. Above the second tunnel may be seen, though much defaced, the gateway, cut in the rock, through which passed the original Roman road at a much higher level. This tremendous defile opens at *Frenay* into a sterile valley thickly covered with rocks of enormous size which have fallen from the mountains, and are interspersed with a few trees and a scanty cultivation. Higher up this wild glen is the hamlet of

*Le Dauphin*, where refreshment may be had at an *Inn*, H. de l'Assurance. Above it the traveller enters the

*Combe de Mulaval*, a nearly straight ravine of unequalled wildness, bounded by the precipitous bases of mountains almost everywhere inaccessible, and crowned by fields of ice of which glimpses are obtained through lateral gorges.

Numerous streams descend in falls from the Glacier du Mont de Lans, and foaming over a steep talus of debris, cross the road, and add to the fury of the Romanche. Close to *Les Fréaux*, a magnificent cataract, springing from the top of the precipice, is called *Le Saut de la Pucelle* from the common story of a peasant-girl leaping down unhurt, to escape the violence of a chasseur.

Still further up the valley, on the S. side, are the lead-mines of *Les Fréaux*, which are said to be worked to advantage. The adits are seen high upon the side of the mountain, and the ropes and machinery extend into the valley.

At the head of this savage glen the road rises to

*La Grave en Oisans* (*Inn*: chez *Juge*, tolerable fare and beds), a small village, beautifully situated on a rock, in full view of the precipices, pinnacles, and glaciers of the *Meije*, or *Aig. du Midi de la Grave*, and the long arête of the *Râteau*. The prospect from the little inn is one of the noblest roadside views in the Alps; it is still better seen from the church, which in itself is worth looking at. During the winter, the cold here precludes the burying of the dead—the ground is too hard; the bodies are therefore suspended in the granges until the returning spring. So wretchedly are the people off for fuel, that, as elsewhere frequently in this district, cowdung is chiefly used.

Glacier guides, with a tariff, are found here.

[S. are the glacier passes of the *Col de la Louze* to St. Christophe; *Brèche de la Meije* (very fine) and *Col de Cavales* to *La Bélarde* (Rte. 160); *Col du Glacier Blanc* to *Val Louise* in about 12 hrs., following the Romanche to its source,

N. are the passes of the *Col du Goleon*, in 10 hrs. to St. Michel, and the wild but not difficult *Col de l'Infernet* (8826 ft., with a splendid view) in about 12 hrs. to St. Jean de Maurienne (see Rte. 158). To the Vallon des Aiguilles d'Arve over the *Col des Trois Pointes* (10,417 ft.), or to head of valley of Arvan by *Col Lombard*, *Les Grandes Rousses* (11,395 ft.), and *Les Aiguilles d'Arve* (11,529 ft.), are fine peaks in that direction. The *Râteau* (12,369 ft.) is accessible from La Grave by E. arête, and the descent may be made either to La Bérarde or to St. Christophe (an interesting climb). The *Pic de la Grave* (12,051 ft.) may be reached in 2 hrs. from the *Col de la Lauze* (a pass destined to become the Strahleck of Dauphiné), by its W. face, and commands a fine view.

The *Plateau de Paris* above the village commands one of the finest possible views of the *Meije* (13,081 ft.), of which the W. pinnacle, no unworthy rival of the Aig. du Dru at Chamonix, was ascended for the first time in 1877 from head of Vallon des Etançons by a French officer, M. de Castelnau, with the two Gaspards of St. Christophe. The Pic Central has been ascended from La Grave. For the ascent it is usual to pass an uncomfortable night on the mountain. An excursion, for the enjoyment of fine scenery, may be made on the great Glacier de Lans, from which it is quite possible to descend either to Freney or St. Christophe.

On leaving La Grave the road leads abruptly to a turn in the valley which overlooks a very fine fall of the Romanche, all its waters being poured into a deep abyss. The road passes 2 galleries, of which the second (2066 ft. in length) is lit before reaching

Villard d'Arène, a wretched village (*Inn*, bad and dear); but for the geologist it has a very interesting section of granite or gneiss overlying limestone. The Romanche is here left to the rt., where it descends a long valley

from its source in an ice-cave of the Glacier d'Arsine. At the head of that valley is the difficult *Col du Glacier Blanc* to Val Louise, and on its E. side a direct pass by the grassy *Col d'Arsinus*, of 7769 ft., to Monestier. The road now ascends in zigzags to the

*Col du Lautaret*, on the ridge which divides the valley of the Romanche from that of Monestier or the Guisanne. It is 6791 feet above the sea; covered with the most beautiful pasturage, and one of the richest spots in Dauphiné for the botanist.

On the summit is a *Maison Hospitalière*, one of those founded by Humbert II. in the 11th century; and close to it a new hospice erected in 1864. The view of the *Meije* and of other peaks, streaming with ice, is magnificent. To the N. are the sources of the Guisane, near the *Col du Gubier*, a pass, lately converted into a carriage-road, leading to Valloire and St. Michel (see Rte. 158A). The descent is steep to the sterile upper valley of the Guisane, at La Madeleine; lower is the village of Casset, at the base of the Glacier du Casset; and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from the col are the

*Baths of Monestier* (*Inn*: H. de l'Europe, chez Izoard—the best between Bourg and Briançon, fairly good and cheap, and obliging host and hostess), 4898 ft. above the sea, with 1781 Inhab., and sulphureous springs. These waters have a temperature of  $100^{\circ}$  to  $120^{\circ}$ , and are both drunk and employed in baths: they are so abundant that they are employed to turn a mill.

[To the rt. is the *Col de l'Echaude*, an easy pass from Monestier to Val Louise, with grand rocky scenery, and on l. *Col de Buffère* to Névache, in the upper valley of the Claire (a lovely spot), more directly accessible from Briançon by char-road.]

The view from Monestier is one of the most beautiful on the road. The whole course of the Guisane is seen to Briançon, where the forts of this frontier town are piled above each other; and beyond it a chain of lofty mountains.

The valley below Monestier exhibits cultivation; barley is grown, and the meadows, by irrigation, are very productive; and, after the naked and sterile route from Le Dauphin to Monestier, the appearance of trees is hailed as giving the highest charm to the scenery.

There are several villages of which the principal are La Salle, Chantemerle, so named from the number of blackbirds that frequent it; and St. Chaffrey. The approach to Briançon is strikingly fine, its walls and forts rising 1276 ft. above the town, and the *Mont Infernet* 2000 ft. higher.

*Briançon*, 3 hours' walk from Monestier (*Inn*: H. de la Paix, fair; good restaurant. Carriage to Oulx, 25 fr.; to Ville Val Louise, 15 fr.; to La Grave, 40 fr.), is a frontier fortress with gates and regular defences, and a very strong position at the junction of 3 valleys. It guards the road into France by the pass of the *Mont Genève* and valley of the *Durance*. A diligence daily to and from Embrun, and to the rail for Susa.

Briançon is a city of high antiquity. Pliny attributed its foundation to the Greeks, who were driven from the borders of the lake of Como; others have given its foundation to Bellovesus or Brennus. Ammianus Marcellinus calls it *Virgantia Castellum*, other writers *Brigantia*. It held a Roman garrison. St. Ambrose was here on his way to Vienne in Dauphiné when he heard of the death of the Emperor Valens, whom he was going to baptize.

This little city is one of the smallest in France, having only 3698 inhab. The streets are narrow and steep, but many of the houses are well built. It boasts of a *Grande Place*: its church is not worth a visit.

The town itself is strong from its position and walls, but the seven forts which guard it render it almost impregnable. Between the city and these forts there is a bridge over the deep bed of the *Durance*, which foams beneath precipices. It is of bold construction, a single arch of 130 English

feet span, 180 feet above the torrent, and was built in 1734, under the direction of the *Maréchal d'Asfeld*. The fort called the *Pointe du Jour* is 1276 ft. above the town; 2000 ft. above it, on the *Mont Infernet*, 7808 ft. above the sea, a new fort has lately been constructed. Several more forts are planned or in construction (1878), and fine roads have been made connecting them with the town.

See *Handbook for France*.

## ROUTE 160.

BRIANÇON TO LA GRAVE, BY VAL LOUISE AND LA BÉRARDE. THE GLACIER PASSES.

This work does not profess to give a complete account of the recesses of the French Alps, for which the traveller must be referred to the works specially framed for glacier explorers. All that is sought here is to direct further attention to their magnificent scenery. Nothing but the want of decent accommodation has hitherto prevented travellers exploring a group of snowy Alps ranking next in height and importance to the Bernese Oberland. Since the creation of a *Tourists' Society* at Grenoble, and of a *French Alpine Club*, with local sections at Grenoble and Chambéry, much has been done to facilitate travel, and within a few years it is probable that the district will be opened to ordinary travellers. Up to the present time it has been the exclusive property of pedestrians prepared to rough it, and carriage travellers, content to pass hastily through it by the high-road of the *Col de Lautaret*.

It must, however, be admitted that though in their forms the peaks are equal to any in the Alps, and the glaciers are rivalled only in a few of the great groups of the central Alps, the scenery of many of the valleys is singularly dreary and desolate, and on this account the Dauphiné Alps can never expect to become a popular resort.

The best approach to the higher peaks is by Bourg d'Oisans and Venos on the W. (Rte. 159), or by *Val Louise*, on the S.E. side.

From La Bessée, on the great road to Gap, a good road leads up a fertile and picturesque open valley in 1½ hrs. to *Ville Val Louise* (4 hrs. from Briançon). Another road somewhat shorter, but only fit for charrs, leaves the high road at Prelles, and skirts the hillside above the junction of the Gyrond and Durance, gaining from the corner a fine glimpse of the Pelvoux.

*Ville Val Louise* (two tolerable *Inns*, chez Gauthier, clean beds, and great civility, chez Giraud, also fair (3937 ft.). The village may also be reached in a char in about 4 hrs. from Guillestre. The church is remarkable, and has a fine porch and belfry. There are several fair guides here: Gauthier, S. A. Sémond, Pierre Engelberge, with a reasonable tariff.

[At *Ville Val Louise*, the *Val d'Entraigues* opens W., leading by high passes to Val Godemar.

*Col du Sellar*. The last chalets are at Entraigues, and the final ascent is over the glacier, or up steep granite rocks on its rt. The descent into the valley of the Severaisse is by glacier and moraine. Small *Inn* at La Chapelle.

The *Col de la Pilatte*, a very difficult pass to La Bérarde, through Vallon des Bans and over Gl. de la Pilatte at foot of Les Bans (11,979 ft.), a peak somewhat difficult of access.]

A good char-road leads past several villages in 3 m. to Les Claux, where the *Val Louise* branches l. to the hamlet of *Ailefroide* and Mt. Pelvoux, rt. to Monestier by the *Col de l'Echaud*. This is an easy pass of 5 hrs. by a bridle-path, and has grand rock scenery and magnificent views of Mont Pelvoux. Height, 7936 ft.

The situation of *Les Claux* is very picturesque. The valley is rich and smiling, numerous cascades burst from the rocks, and the noble ice-crowned cliffs of Mt. Pelvoux close the view.

Beyond the village, the mule-path crosses the stream to the rt. bank,

and ascends steadily through a very grand and well-wooded defile (a singular feature in these Alps) to, 1½ hr.

The chalets of *Ailefroide*, at the base of the Pelvoux and the junction of the Vallon de Celce-Nière (leading to the Col du Sélé) and the Combe de St. Pierre, leading to the Pré de Madame Carle.

[*Col du Sélé* (10,834 ft.) to La Bérarde, about 8 hrs.' actual walking from *Ailefroide* up the Combe de Celce-Nière to the Glacier du Sélé at its head. Then by débris and rocks on the N. bank, and higher up by the glacier. Superb view in the descent of the great W. precipice of the Pic d'*Ailefroide* and its crest of jagged pinnacles. The ice-fall of the Glacier de la Pilatte is passed by slopes of snow and débris on the W. bank.

The highest point of *Crête des Bœufs Rouges*, S. of col (reached in 1½ hr.), has a fine view. From the head of this valley Mr. Coolidge, in 1870, made the first ascent of the *Ailefroide* (12,989 ft.), the third highest peak of the group.

The *Mont Pelvoux*, first ascended 1828, by the French engineers under Commandant Durand, has been likened to a sugar-loaf, with the top cut off, hollowed out, and filled with snow. From the rim rise 3 points, and below it the mountain sides are almost everywhere precipitous. From *Ailefroide*, 2½ hrs. from La Ville, where the ascent properly begins, a traveller sees above him some 7000 ft. of apparently vertical cliffs.

To gain the summit it is necessary to pass the night at the Refuge de Provence, erected by the French Alpine Club, 2 hrs. above *Ailefroide* and 8937 ft. above the sea. Thence the mountain is ascended to the small Glacier du Clot de l'Homme, but this is too broken to be traversed. Mr. Tuckett (in 1862) climbed a couloir to the E. of it, then the higher part of the glacier, and by a cheminée on the rt. to the upper snow-slopes, and the summit, which was reached in 5 hrs. from the foot of the ice. He

describes the view as most magnificent, extending to Monte Rosa, Mt. Blanc and the mountains of Auvergne, while the Pic d'Ailefroide close by, and the Monte Viso, 40 m. off, are grand features of the prospect.

In the *Combe de Colce-Nière*, below the Cabane, is the cave called the *Balme Chapelin*, or *Beaume des Vaudois*, where the Protestants of Val Louise were destroyed at the time of the Vaudois persecutions. It is now nearly blocked up by rocks which have fallen.]

The path, faintly marked but not very rough, ascends steadily through fine savage scenery until it reaches the edge of the Pré de Madame Carle, a plain at least a mile long, entirely strewn with boulders brought down by the torrents which fall from the impending precipices. In front is seen the dirty snout of the well-named Glacier Noir. On the rt. the diminished skirts of the Glacier Blanc hang over a breach in the mountain walls. The *Crête de l'Enclue*, or *Grande Sagne* (12,399 ft.), towers opposite, and in the rear rises the serrated range of the *Seguret-Furan* (11,375 ft.).

On the only patch of safe ground, among a few stunted firs, the French Alpine Club have constructed a roomy stone cabin with hay bed, the *Refuge Césaire*,  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. above Ailefroide. This is a convenient starting-place for mountaineers, at the junction of many superb glacier passes.

The chief of these are

*Col de la Tempe* to La Bérarde, an easy glacier pass of 11,562 ft., between Les Ecrins and the Pic d'Ailefroide. The ice-fall of the Glacier Noir is passable at the base of Mont Pelvoux. Then the higher fields of the glacier are traversed to the upper plateau, from which a couloir and rocks are climbed to the col. Hence the view of the savage and, on this side, inaccessible cliffs of the Ecrins and Pelvoux, is superb. The descent is by the Glacier de la Tempe, and its moraine, in 2 hrs. to the opening of the glen into the Combe de la Pilatte, 1 hr. above La Bérarde.

The *Col de la Coste Rouge* is a shorter and lower pass ( $9\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.) from the Glacier Noir to La Bérarde by the Glacier de la Coste Rouge, long known to the people of the country, which has unaccountably fallen into disuse. It is the easiest of all the passes across this range.

The *Col des Ecrins* (11,071 ft.). The ascent is up the Glacier Blanc, and under the N. and accessible face of the Ecrins. It is better taken from La Bérarde, and has one serious obstacle—a snow couloir on the W., of more than 1000 ft. of vertical height. From the foot of the Glacier Blanc the rocks of the Enclue are climbed. The glacier is then crossed to the N. bank, where the ascent is continued by the side of an ice-fall along slopes of snow and débris. A higher reach of the glacier leads to the col, which commands a noble view of the topmost crags and séracs of the Pointe des Ecrins. On the other side is the steep and formidable couloir. The Glacier de la Bonne Pierre below it presents no unusual difficulties, and the traveller descends by it, and along its moraine to the Vallon d'Étançons, at a point 1 m. N. of La Bérarde.

The *Pointe des Ecrins* (13,462 ft.), the *Montagne d'Oursine* of Bourcet, and also called the *Pic des Arcines*, was first ascended, 1864, from the Col des Ecrins, by Messrs. Moore, Walker, and Whymper. They had first to turn a wide bergschrund, and then to climb cliffs and ice-slopes of perilous steepness, while the arête was so narrow that they had to pass it astride. Later travellers have found the mountain in a less dangerous condition, and, though difficult, it does not appear to be one of the most formidable peaks. It is generally best to ascend by the face to a point on the arête rather E. of the summit, and then along the final ridge.

*Col du Glacier Blanc* to Villard d'Arène and La Grave, a noble glacier pass of 10,800 ft., but difficult, parti-

cularly the descent of formidably steep and unstable rocks to the Glacier d'Arsines on the N. side. It is fit only for active mountaineers.

*La Bélarde*, two or three rude farm-houses, in a singularly savage situation, the highest hamlet in the valley of St. Christophe, contains a poor but improving *Inn*, kept by the Rodiers. This is a centre for innumerable excursions for fair mountaineers. The passes to the E. have been already described. To the S., besides the routes to *La Grave* and *Val Louise* just mentioned, it is possible to pass to the Val Godemar by the *Col du Sais* (10,289 ft.), *Col du Chardon* (10,168 ft.), or *Col des Rouies*, none of which offer any unusual difficulty. From the latter pass it is possible to reach in  $\frac{3}{4}$  hr. the *Sommet des Rouies* (11,923 ft.), which commands a very grand and extensive view on all sides, and is strongly recommended as a day's excursion from La Bélarde. (Rte. 159.)

An interesting pass (*Col de la Lavey*) leads by the Gl. du Chardon, S. of *Tête de l'Étret* (11,690 ft. accessible from the pass), to the Combe de la Lavey and S. Christophe.

A good excursion from La Bélarde is the ascent of the highest point of *Montagne de Clochâtel* (11,729 ft.) from Glacier du Chardon, returning to La Bélarde by the glacier and village of Les Etages.

On the N. side of the valley the *Pluret* (11,713 ft.), and *Tête de la Gandolme* (11,643 ft.), are easy of access, and command gorgeous views.

St. Christophe may be reached through the Val des Étançons, by a pass (*Brèche du Râteau*) between the Râteau and Tête du Replat and the Glacier de la Selle—a pleasant excursion.

The *Grande Ruine* (12,317 ft.) has been reached by its S. arête from Col de la Casse Déserte, but it is easier to descend from the pass, round the mountain mass, and attack it from the N. The Meije appears to especial advantage from this peak.

The *Râteau* (12,317 ft.) may be [Switz.]

climbed from the Val des Étançons by its S. ridge.

There are but few excursions from La Bélarde for ordinary tourists, and those not willing to undergo great fatigue. These persons should not, however, fail to walk an hour or two up *Val des Étançons* to get a view of the wonderful S. face of the Meije (by which it can be ascended with great difficulty).

The Glaciers de la Bonnepierre and de la Pilatte are within range of an easy walk; there is especially a grassy spot at the junction of the Combe du Chardon and Combe de la Pilatte, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. from La Bonne Pierre, whence a splendid view of the precipices of the Ailefroide (12,989 ft.) can be gained.

A path was constructed by the French Alpine Club in 1878 up the *Tête de la Mays* (8881 ft.) (summit easily reached in 2 hrs. from La Bélarde), the Gornergrat of the district, the view from which includes all the chief summits of the Dauphiné group.

More glacier excursions can be made from La Bélarde than from any other village in the Alps, not even excepting Zermatt. A decent inn (and matters are improving every year under the auspices of the Soc. des Touristes) is all that is required to make it one of the chief haunts of mountaineers.

The most tempting route for a mountaineer who has reached La Bélarde by one of the passes from the side of Ville Val Louise is the *Brèche de la Meije*. This fine glacier pass, discovered in 1864, leads immediately under the great W. pinnacle of the Meije, which was conquered from the Glacier des Étançons in 1877 by M. de Castelnau with two local guides, and is one of the longest and most severe rock-climbs in the Alps.

The *Vallon des Étançons* through which the traveller ascends from Le Bélarde is stony and desolate, and but for the remarkable view of the Meije, which on the side from which it has been climbed

appears absolutely perpendicular, would be very wearisome. An easy glacier leads to the low rocky curtain uniting the Meije and the Râteau. Either by rocks or snow this is easily climbed from the S., but the N. face, of about equal height, becomes late in the season a bare icewall defended by a "bergschrund," and requiring the greatest care in step-cutting on the part of the guides. The glacier which falls towards La Grave is too steep and broken to be traversed, and a way has to be found down the rocks on its W. side. Here local knowledge is essential, but with it no serious difficulties need be encountered. From the pass there is a superb view S. of the peaks surrounding La Bérarde, and N. over the Tarentaise to Mt. Blanc. From La Bérarde to La Grave is a walk of 9 to 10 hours in favourable circumstances.

Travellers not accustomed to rock-climbing may find the descent of the Brèche formidable, and should prefer the Col de la Lauze, for which the starting-point is St. Christophe (Rte. 159).

The *Col des Cavales*, the *Col de la Casse Déserte*, and the *Brèche de Charrière* are gaps through which mountaineers pass to the Lautaret road from the Vallon des Etançons.

### ROUTE 161.

#### BRIANÇON TO SUSA.—PASS OF THE MONT GENÈVRE.

| Briançon.             | Miles. |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Mont Genève . . . . . | 7½     |
| Cesanne . . . . .     | 6      |
| Oulx . . . . .        | 5      |

Diligence to Oulx stat. on the Mt. Cenis Rly., at 7 p.m., in 6 hrs.

On leaving Briançon for the Mont Genève, the narrow valley of the Durance is ascended for more than a league, as far as La Vachette, a hamlet at the foot of the pass. Here, on the L., opens the *Val de Névache*, a fine, large, and productive valley, a striking contrast to the valley of the

Guisane. It is also called the *Val des Prés*, from its rich meadows. Its mountains are clothed with forests; through it the river Clairée, springing from the glaciers of the Mont Thabor, flows for 8 leagues, and then loses its name in a less considerable torrent—the Durance, which has scarcely run 2 leagues from its source in the Mont Genève. Mont Thabor may be ascended from this side (see Rte. 154).

[From *Planpinet* in this valley is the low pass of the *Col des Echelles* to Bardonnèche, near the entrance of the Mt. Cenis Tunnel.]

The ascent commences through a pine-forest, and by a series of admirably constructed zigzags leads the traveller to the col, and presents at every turn a variety in the views of Briançon and its forts, the valleys of the Durance and Névache, and the surrounding mountains. The old road continued by the pine-forests up the L. bank of the stream, and pedestrians still pursue it, as it is much the shorter.

The summit of the pass is a plain, remarkable for the culture of barley at a height of 6100 ft. above the sea, and there are fine pasturages on the slopes of the neighbouring mountains. Here is a *hospice*, founded in the 13th cent., and restored by the late Abbé Auel (d. 1863). It enjoys an income of 15,000*l.*, of which 6000 are furnished by the State, and it expends the sum in relief. 200 persons sometimes pass in a day. Not far from it is a village called

*Bourg Mont Genève*, 3 leagues from Briançon, inhabited all the year, and containing the French douane. In its neighbourhood, and almost from a common source, two rivers rise—the Durance, which flows into France and the Mediterranean, and the Dora-Susina or Dora Riparia, which flows into the Po and the Adriatic.

For a short time their gentle murmurs mingle on the height—

"Adieu, ma sœur, la Durance,  
Nous nous séparons sur ce mont;  
Tu vas ravager la Provence,  
Moi féconder le Piedmont."

An obelisk, erected to commemorate





the construction, in 1802-7, of this fine road over the Alps, is 60 ft. high, and had on its pedestal inscriptions to record the event: these the Bourbons removed.

On leaving the col the course of the Dora is followed down a series of tourniquets, made in the loose soil under *Mont Chaberton* (10,258 ft.), until the road reaches the bed of the river and crosses it about 2 m. from Césanne, where the torrent falls into the larger stream of the Ripa, descending from the lofty mountains which bound the Protestant valleys of Piedmont.

Césanne, at the junction of the road from the Col de Sestrières, and with two miserable Inns, is not more than 4 hrs.' walk from Briançon.

Below Césanne, the road lies straight down the valley to Susa. The first important commune is

*Oulx*, on the Mt. Cenis Rly. (Rte. 154).

Pedestrians may cross to Modane by the *Col de Frejus*, or *Col de la Rome*. The former, which is nearly over the tunnel, is the shorter, but rough and steep; the latter is a frequented pass of about 7 hrs., 4 up and 3 down. To the W. of it is another pass by the *Val Étroite* and *Col de la Saume* (Rte. 154).

## ROUTE 162.

BRIANÇON TO PIGNEROL, BY THE COL DE SESTRIÈRES, FÉNESTRELLES, PÉROUSE, AND THE VAUDOIS VALLEYS.

| Briançon.              | Miles. |
|------------------------|--------|
| Césanne . . . . .      | 13½    |
| Sestrières . . . . .   | 8      |
| Pragelas . . . . .     | 4½     |
| Fénestrelles . . . . . | 7      |
| Pérouse . . . . .      | 9      |
| Pignerol . . . . .     | 12     |

The inns between Briançon and Pignerol are poor. As far as Césanne this is the same route as that last described.

It is 9 hrs.' good walking from Césanne to Pérouse.

The road made by Napoleon, from Césanne into Italy, is more direct than that by Turin. From Césanne it crosses the Dora, and immediately commences the ascent to the col, by a series of zigzags like that of the descent from the Mont Genève; the lengthened snake-like course of the one can be seen from the other across the valley. The traveller soon reaches the hamlet of *Champlas*, and continues to ascend over fine pasturages, until he reaches the

2¼ hrs. *Col de Sestrières* (8762 ft.) and chalets on a plain nearly 2 miles long. Towards the E. the view is wild and fine of the *Val Pragelas*, and the *Mont Albergian*. In descending, the road leads down by tourniquets to the banks of the Clusone, and to the first village, *Sestrières* (Inn: Rosa Rossa; comfortable), and thence to the village of

1½ hr. *Les Traverses*, with a humble Inn (*La Rose Rouge*—clean beds). The broad channel of the river beneath the dark-pine forest opposite *Pragelas*, a larger village below *Les Traverses*, gives rather an appearance of sterility to the valley, which is generally known by the name of Clusone, but among its inhabitants the upper part above the fort of *Fénestrelles* is called *Val Pragelas*; below the fort it is often called *Val de Pérouse*.

2 hrs. 40 min. *Fénestrelles*, a village of 800 Inhab. (Inns: Rosa Rossa; Tre Re, pretty good). The fort of *Fénestrelles* is a place of great strength, which guards the approach to Piedmont. It rises in terraces from the defile formed by the base of the Mont Albergian, and commands the left bank of the torrent by its immense ranges of fortifications. The highest battery is accessible through a gallery which contains 3600 steps. On the summit is a basin covered with verdure, called *Le Pré de Catinat*, from that general having encamped there.

These works have been in progress of construction by the Sardinian Go-

vernment since 1816. They succeeded an older fortress in 5 tiers, blown up by the army of the French Republic. The 3 detached forts—about a mile distant from the town, called St. Charles, Quatre Dents, and des Vallées—command the approaches. A 4th battery, called Charles Albert, sweeps the high road. On the base of the Albergian are remains of older forts built by the French when this country belonged to them, to defend the pass in the opposite direction. The village of Fénestrelles lies in the middle of the defile. The fort is used as a military prison. It is the scene of M. Saintine's tale of 'Picciola.'

[From Fénestrelles there is a very pretty Pass, by the *Col de la Fenêtre*, in 5 hrs. to Susa. From the top, which is carpeted with alpine flowers, is a magnificent view over the Dora, in which the Roche Melon is a striking object for the last hour or two of rugged descent.]

From Fénestrelles to Pignerol (diligence daily) there is little variety in the scenery: the valley is generally narrow; but where there is cultivation, corn and vines abound. The mulberry for the silkworm flourishes, and fruit and forest trees luxuriate, as they almost always do on the side of Piedmont. At an early time the Val Clusone was filled with a Protestant community, but their living in it was for a long period prohibited. The Vaudois churches were not permitted out of the valleys of Rora, Luserna, St. Martin, and Angrogna; but the more liberal policy of the Government since 1848 has removed this restriction.

Below Fénestrelles, the road passes through numerous villages and hamlets—Mentoulles, Villaret, La Balme, and Château de Bois,—before reaching

3 hrs. 10 min. *Pérouse* or *Perosa* (*Inns*: Campana, good; H. del Solé; H. National; and others). This is the principal town in the Val di Perosa, and contains silk manufactories. It is situated directly opposite the mouth

of Val de St. Martin, one of the most interesting of the Protestant valleys.

*Diligence* to Pignerol daily.

[*Excursions*.—Up the valley of St. Martin to *Le Perrier* or *Perrero* and the famous *Balsille*. A good pedestrian may also include the valleys of *Rodoret* and *Pralis*. These, like Angrogna (Rte. 163), are the classic ground of the Vaudois.

From Pérouse take a carriage to *Le Perrier*. The road is tolerable, and the distance ought to be done in 1½ hr. The scenery is magnificent, grander than that of Val Angrogna, though not so picturesque. After crossing the Clusone by a fine bridge at a silk factory, *Ponaret* is before us on the rt., situated in the mouth of the valley of St. Martin. The village is inhabited by Vaudois, and is one of their principal stations. It contains a good ch., hospital, high school, and two primary schools. The people though poor are intelligent and industrious. The vineyards and fields are models of neatness; but the streets and houses, like all those in these regions, are filthy. ½ an hr. up the glen is a sublime pass, formed by projecting cliffs, between which the torrent rushes in sheets of foam. Farther up the valley opens, and the banks of the stream are here and there studded with prosperous-looking hamlets, and isolated houses, in some cases large and imposing.

*Le Perrier* (*Inn*: Rosa Rossa) is a populous village, beautifully situated on the l. bank of the river. Its houses are substantial, but its streets narrow. It contains a fine new *Vaudois Church* and parsonage, and its people are obliging and intelligent. A *quôte* should be taken from this place. *Peynorel* is very trustworthy; the pastor will also recommend one. Hence the mule-path follows the l. bank of the stream for ¼ hr., with a grand view in front. A bridge is then crossed, and the glen forks; the branch on the l. is called *Germanasca*, with a branch to *Rodoret*, that on the rt. *St. Martin*. We take the latter, ascending rapidly, and

keeping the rt. bank for about 1 hr. On the opposite wooded slope of the mountain, is seen the bright little Vaudois ch. and hamlet of *Maneille* (Maniglia). This was formerly the capital of the parish and residence of the pastor, but recently it has been joined to Perier, and the parish is now called Maneille-Perrier.

Crossing the stream by a stone bridge, the path enters a magnificent ravine, through which it winds, until, in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. the glen opens and reveals a little basin formed by the junction of two valleys, that on the l. Salse, that on the rt. Massel. The bottom is carpeted with green meadows, and the sides clothed with foliage; overhead is a circle of dark, snow-capped mountains. The path here forks; the rt. leads high up round the shoulder of the mountain into the valley of the Massel, and is the shortest route to Balsille. The l. descends, crosses a bridge, and leads into the glen of Salse. A branch from the latter turns to the rt., descends through thickets, crosses the stream of Salse by a wooden foot-bridge, and leads up to the hamlet of Champ de Salse, which is seen on the green slope away in front, and which is at present the residence of the pastor of Massel. We take the first path, and enter the glen of Massel. The Vaudois ch. and parsonage (the latter nearly ruined by a land-slip, but now restored) are passed, and a magnificent view gained of the head of the glen, with a waterfall, and lofty mountains behind. The pastor is happy to lend a room.

In  $\frac{3}{4}$  hr. from the mouth of the glen is *Gros Passet*, a village built on a projecting rock, 200 ft. above the stream. It forms the natural outpost of Balsille. The views from it are very grand. In 20 min. more is the hamlet of *Balsille* or *La Balsiglia*, situated at the junction of the two upper branches of the glen. The stream is here crossed and the site of the fortress gained by an exceedingly steep and difficult path. It stands in the fork of the valleys, from 400 to 500 ft.

above the bed of the stream, and it must at one time have been all but impregnable. There are few remains visible; but the site is occupied by wretched houses. On the rt., across the stream, is the platform of *Günirert*, where the enemy planted their cannon; and high up behind the fortress is the mountain peak to which the Vaudois retreated in the night.—*J. L. P.*

On the Balsille the Vaudois entrenched themselves under Henri Arnaud. Here the little handful of brave men, not exceeding 600 or 700, struggled for their fatherland, and fought for three days, in 1690, the united armies of France and Sardinia, amounting to 22,000 men. When the latter, however, found it necessary to bring up artillery, which was accomplished with excessive difficulty, the heroic Vaudois, foreseeing that against the cannon they could not hold their position, retreated during the night without losing a man; and the following day, their sovereign of Sardinia, having quarrelled with his allies, agreed to restore them to their valleys and their hearths.

Above the Balsille grand materials for alpine scenery are found, in cataclysms, ravines, and mountains: from the head of the valley is the *Col du Pis* to Pragelas in the Val Clusone. From Pêrouse to Pragelas will occupy one day, and there are few finer passes in these Alps.

Another passage between the valleys of St. Martin and Clusone is the *Col Albergian*, which leads from the Balsille and the wild Alps above it to Fénestrelles.

From Pêrouse to the Balsille and back, may be accomplished easily in a day.

The S.W. branch of the Val St. Martin is called the *Val Germagnasca*. This in its turn is divided into 2 branches, the one leading to *Rodoret*, the other to *Pralis*. From the first there is the *Col della Valletta* to Césanne by the valley of the Clusone, and the *Col de Rodoret* to Césanne by the valley of the Ripa (Rte. 161). From Pralis it is possible to reach Césanne on the one side, or Abriés

(Rte. 163) on the other, by the *Col d'Abriès*.

There are beautiful passes from Le Perrier and the lower part of the valley of St. Martin to *Pra del Tor*, in the Val Angrogna, and thence to La Tour de Luserna.]

On the route from Pérouse to Pignerol several villages are passed, in one of which is a large Catholic ch.

*S. Germano* (Inn: l'Ours, clean), with a large Protestant ch. The manager of the cotton-mill here receives boarders during the summer. Opposite this are large quarries, whence stone is sent to Turin. To the right is the little valley which leads to *Pramol*; still further down is the *Church of Prarustin*, where the valley widens, and the road enters the plain, through the hamlets of *Porte* and *Abbadia*, to

*Pignerol* (Ital. *Pinerolo*), Inhab. 22,000 (Inns: Campana, Rosa Rossa, Canon d'Or, &c.). Pignerol is the seat of a Roman Catholic bishop, and is a sous-prefecture. It is also a garrison town, and has a cavalry school, a college, and a theatre. The old town on the hill of *S. Maurizio* was once a strong fortress. The new town has beautiful public gardens, and contains cotton, wool, and silk manufactories.

The *Convent of St. Francis* is partly ancient, and its church contains monuments to ancestors of the royal house of Savoy.

On the hill of *St. Brigitte* are ruins of a chapel, and of the ancient *citadel*, in which the "Man in the Iron Mask" was shut up. Near the Town-hall (*Palazzo della Città*) are the *Theatre* and a *College*. Lodgings and villas can be hired, and there is a good and cheap market.

*Railway* to Turin 23½ m.; 3 trains a day in 1 hr. 10 min.; the stations are Riva, Piscina, Airasca, None, Candiolo, Nichellino, and Sangone.

*Omnibuses* to La Tour, Pérouse, S. Germano, Fénestrelles, Cavour, and Saluzzo, &c.

## ROUTE 163.

PIGNEROL TO MONT DAUPHIN, BY THE VALLEYS OF THE VAUDOIS AND THE COL DE LA CROIX.

| Pignerol.                   | Miles. |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| La Tour . . . . .           | 9      |
| Bobbio . . . . .            | 7½     |
| Col de la Croix . . . . .   | 10     |
| Abriès . . . . .            | 6½     |
| Château de Queyras. . . . . | 8      |
| Mont Dauphin . . . . .      | 15     |

From *Pignerol* (Rte. 162) omnibus to La Tour on the arrival of each train from Turin; but as the horses are bad, and the conveyance generally crowded, it is better to engage a light carriage. There are two carriage owners, *Vigliano* and *De Giorgio*, about 5 min. from the station: the latter is the best. One horse 6 fr. a day. There are two routes to *Briqueras* (5 m.), one through *S. Secondo* the other, which is usually taken, through *Osasco*. The country is rich and beautiful, covered with corn-fields, vineyards, and orchards. The views on the rt. up the wooded valleys to the snow-covered Alps are very grand.

*Briqueras*, or *Bricherasio*, is a clean and pretty village, with several *Inns*, and a fine castle belonging to the Count of Monte Vecchio.

Three miles beyond *Briqueras* is the first Protestant community.

*S. Giovanni*. Here a church was built while Piedmont was under the government of Napoleon. It is of a singular form—a horse-shoe—which is not favourable to the preacher.

About a mile beyond *S. Giovanni*, through a beautiful country, lies

*La Tour* (It. *Torre Pellice*) (Inns: L'Ours, good; Lion de St. Marc), the principal town of the Protestant communities, at the foot of *Mont Vandolino*, and near the confluence of the Angrogna and Pellice. The spacious but simple *Protestant Church*, at the W. end, was built 1850, with residences for the clergy and

professors. General Beckwith contributed largely to it. This British veteran, who lost his leg at Waterloo, devoted 34 years of his life to improving the condition of the Waldenses. He lived among them, took a wife from among them, built churches—more than 100 schools for them, and lies buried (1862) in the churchyard here.

An *Hospital* was erected with funds raised chiefly in Holland, Russia, and England. It is now largely endowed by Sig. Pellegrin à Vaudois. In 1837, by the aid of an anonymous gift from England, of 5000*l.* confided to the late Rev. Dr. Gilly, a *College* was established for the education of young men for the ministry of the Vaudois churches, thus obviating the necessity which had before existed of sending them to Geneva or Lausanne. This institution is chiefly endowed by contributions from foreign countries, but owing in a great measure to the liberality, the exertions, and the zeal for the cause of the Vaudois, of General Beckwith and Dr. Gilly. In 1861 the superior classes were removed to Florence. There is an *Orphanage* for girls under English auspices — an admirable institution not equalled in Italy; also a normal school. A large Roman Catholic church, built for the conversion of the Vaudois, has been attended by signal failure. The picturesque parsonage is a memorial to Dr. Gilly.

Within  $\frac{1}{2}$  m. of La Tour a cotton-mill of 4 stories, moved by water-power, belongs to Signor Malan. The neighbourhood has several silk-winding mills, and the culture of the silk-worm occupies the women.

No part of the Alps surpasses the valleys of the Vaudois in richness and beauty in the lower valleys, and in wild and magnificent scenery in the defiles and mountains. Easy of access by railroad from Turin to Pignerol, La Tour is reached in 2 hrs. from the latter, through a country luxuriant in vegetation. There are good *Inns* at La Tour; and the politeness of all classes to strangers, especially English, ought to be a recommenda-

tion. Of the Vaudois generally, but especially of the mountaineers, it has been justly said, that "they are, from ancient habit, honest, civil, and quiet; and, from necessity, simple and laborious."

La Tour forms the best centre for a series of excursions into the southern valleys of the Vaudois. The obliging landlord of Hotel l'Ours will recommend a trustworthy guide, acquainted with the mountain paths, and, what is no less important, the spots noted in Waldensian history. It is the *religio loci* which gives such a charm to every excursion in this region. The cream of the southern valleys may be seen in three days by moderate pedestrians; but the mountaineer must not expect to find here men capable of aiding in difficult or adventurous ascents.

The following plan is recommended.

*1st day.* Leave La Tour not later than 7 A.M.; descend the road towards S. Giovanni, then turn to the rt. across the fine stream of Pellice, and ascend through picturesque orchards to

*Luserna.* (No *Inns.*) The new château of the Count of Luserna occupies a commanding site on the rt. The old castle is in the centre of the village, and deserves a visit. Over the gate appears the motto of the ancient family, and of the Vaudois Church. The village is exclusively inhabited by Roman Catholics.

We leave by a narrow road which leads up the wild *ravine of Rora*. It has been constructed for the transport of flags from the great quarries high up on the mountains. It is in a wretched state of repair, and though wheeled vehicles may pass along it, the experiment cannot be recommended. About 15 min. above Luserna is a small chapel, where a branch road leads l., over the wooded ridge of Lusernette to Bibiana and Bagnol. An hour's walk up this road to the crown of the principal ridge will give some splendid views of the plain of Piedmont, and the villages along the foot of the mountains southward. Returning to the chapel we enter the

ravine of Rora and the territory of the Vaudois. As we ascend, the valley narrows and the scenery becomes wild and grand. Up a little side valley on the rt., embosomed in trees, and not visible from the road, is the birthplace and home of *Gianavello*, one of the most illustrious of Waldensian patriots. To visit it will take an extra half-hour. The cliffs over it on the W. formed the scene of some of his most daring exploits. The road winds up the glen, crosses the torrent by a good stone bridge, and, in about 1 hr. from Luserna, reaches a point where the valley branches. The branch on the l. is wider, but that on the rt. is deeper and wilder. At the head of the former are the flag quarries, and up it the road is carried; but there is little in it of interest to the tourist. A path from it leads over a high ridge to Bagnol. We cross the stream by a wooden bridge at a mill, and climb the rocky bank by a zigzag mule-track, having on the rt. the hamlet of Fusines, or Fucine, inhabited entirely by Vaudois. The ascent from this spot to Rora is steep and fatiguing, and will require an hour.

Rora is a picturesque village, with a handsome Vaudois church. A walk of half an hour along the mountain side beyond it, toward the head of the valley, affords some magnificent views down to Luserna, and across the Italian plain. Rora was the scene of some of the most celebrated struggles of the Vaudois, and for a time their head-quarters.

Half an hour's climb up a very steep mountain brings us from Rora to the summit of the great ridge, which separates the valleys of Rora and Luserna. The rocky peak called *Rocheras* is its culminating point toward the W.; the tourist should not fail to ascend it. On it *Gianavello* and his little band of warriors were wont to take their stand, reconnoitre the enemy, and form their plans of attack or defence. It commands one of the finest and most interesting views in the country. *Gianavello's* house

lies amid orchards at the foot of the cliffs. The valleys of Rora and Pellice are seen throughout their whole extent. The rugged ridge of *Vandolin*, so famous in Vaudois story; the lovely glen of *Angrogna* running far up behind it; the circuit of mountains on the W., beginning at the noble peak of *Monte Viso*, and bounding the Vaudois territory; and the plain of *Piedmont*, all are visible. *Turin* is seen, and the proud *Superga* forms a prominent object on the horizon. A rapid descent of an hour, following a goat-track to the bottom of the ravine, and then crossing a bridge which spans the *Pellice*, brings us to *La Tour*.

*2nd day.* Ascend the valley of *Angrogna* to *Pra del Tor*, and return by *St. Jean*. To accomplish this with ease will require 7 or 8 hrs., and it is best to walk it.

Leaving *La Tour*, ascend the vine-clad height above the town, on which once stood the fortress that gave the town its name. Traces of it are still visible. A short path may be taken from it direct into the valley of *Angrogna*, crossing the stream near a mill; but it is on the whole better to descend again to *La Tour*, after admiring the beautiful view, and examining the formation of the valleys. We pass the new *Roman Catholic church*, finely situated at the base of the ridge on which *La Tour* stands, and just over the torrent of *Angrogna*. It was erected in 1844, and, at the special invitation of the Pope, the king honoured the consecration with his presence.

Turning here sharply to the l. we enter the *Valley of Angrogna*, which for the richness and grandeur of its scenery is unsurpassed in these Alps. A large stream runs along its narrow bed, lashed to fury by projecting cliffs, and rocks that have fallen from the mountains. Here and there it is hidden beneath the spreading foliage of the walnut, willow, and weeping-ash. The lower slopes are terraced and clothed with grass or corn. Vineyards cover the terraces higher up, intermixed with noble groves of trees,

in which the chestnut and walnut predominate. Higher still are forests of beech and oak; while along the summits of the mountains the hazel and birch grow luxuriantly among the jagged rocks. Picturesque houses and little hamlets appear here and there embowered in foliage.

An hour's quick walk from La Tour brings us to the neat ch. and parsonage of *Angrogna*, a charming spot. The view from the balcony, or terraced garden of the parsonage is delightful. It commands the valley from the "gates of the Pra" down to the broad plain. There is here a small *Rom. Cath. church*, and a convent, containing a solitary monk. A sharp zigzag walk of 45 min. up the wooded hillside, brings us to *La Grotte*, a large cavern, difficult of access, and concealed amid rocks and bushes. It was one of the retreats of the persecuted Vaudois, in which they were accustomed to meet for worship in troublous times; it was also the home of their pastors. It is not generally known to the guides of La Tour, and those who visit it should take a special guide from Angrogna.

A descent of 20 min. through groves and vineyards brings us to one of the most interesting spots in the valleys. There is nothing now to mark it, except a few large chestnuts surrounding a green terrace on the steep mountain side; but there is a farmhouse not far distant, where the people will be found intelligent, and ready to give information. This is *Chamfourin*, where the first Vaudois Synod was held on Sept. 12th, 1532. It was attended by the Reformers Farel and Olivetan. Here the Waldenses drew up a Confession of Faith in 17 Articles, and declared that their Apostolic religion, as set forth in these Articles, was identical with that of the Reformers of Germany and Switzerland. Here too they resolved to publish a translation of the Holy Scriptures for the use of their people. The resolution was carried out 3 years later by the publication, at Neuchâtel, of the first

French translation of the sacred volume.

The rugged path now descends rapidly to the banks of the stream, passing the village of St. Laurent, with an old church. The valley contracts, and the rocks and cliffs in front seem to forbid farther progress. The celebrated *Barricade*, or outwork of the Pra, is reached in about 2½ hrs. from Angrogna. A huge cliff rises over the narrow path, and above it tower again other cliffs, rugged and impassable, to the summit of the mountain. Many a tale of devotion and heroism is related of this spot. Again and again, during long years it was held by a few Vaudois against armies. The guide will point out a deep pool, at the foot of a cascade, called "*the Pool of Sachette*," from a gigantic captain of Papal troops, who was hurled into it by the Vaudois in 1488. When drawn out of the river his dead body was stretched upon an adjoining flat rock, and its length marked by lines which remained until obliterated a few years ago by the priest of La Tour. From the Barricade, which is sometimes called *Rochaille*, to Pra is an hour's good walking.

*Pra del Tor* (Meadow of the Tower) is a green, basin-shaped valley, encompassed by wild mountains, and having two or three glens radiating from it. A mountaineer may cross the high pass, *Col du Rousine*, leading from it to the Col Julien in the W.; but the only approach available for troops is that by the ravine of Angrogna. It was the sanctuary of the Vaudois during some of the most terrible of their persecutions, and it was defended by them against the armies of the Pope with fierce determination.

In returning from the Pra a lower path may be taken, still following the l. bank of the stream, but keeping closer to the river. On reaching the mouth of the valley, about a mile from La Tour, a narrow zigzag path to the l. leads up (in 10 min.) to the old Ch. of *Chubas*, erected 1630. It stands on a commanding site, and is on the confines of the parishes of St. Jean

and Angrogna, though within the latter. Its origin was this: in ancient times the Vaudois were not permitted to have a church, or to hold any public religious service within the parish of St. Jean; they therefore erected this ch., and in it the Protestants of the parish were accustomed to meet until the new ch. of St. Jean was built. Chabas contains the tombs of several Englishmen of distinction, who having died in Italy could only obtain Christian burial within the Vaudois territory. The traveller, if not too much fatigued, may walk round by St. Jean, and then up the main road to La Tour. This will require an hour extra.—*J. L. P.*

*3rd day.* Explore the valley of Pellice, taking the carriage-road to Villar (1½ hr.), a large village on the l. bank of the river; thence to Bobbio, and the interesting spots at the head of the glen and on the mountains around it, as described below, returning to La Tour for the night. In the evening the *Vindolin* may be ascended to gain the magnificent view, and see another stronghold of the Vaudois.

From La Tour, up the valley of the Pellice, the road, widened for carriages as far as Bobbio, passes by the hamlet of St. Marguerite, near the rock of *Castelluz*, on the face of which is a cavern, only to be reached by a rope, in which the Vaudois sheltered. The rock rises behind a Protestant church, restored by Mrs. Molyneux Williams, and containing a monument to Gen. Beckwith. Beyond this hamlet the ascent of the valley is rich and picturesque. [Opposite the village of Villar (an Inn) a narrow glen opens to the S., by which Crissolo, in the head valley of the Po (Rte. 163), may be reached in 6 hrs. over the ridge of the *Sea Bianca*.]

2½ hrs. from La Tour is *Bobbio*. No Inn, but at the station of the douaniers, a café, where Jacques Raymond, a civil and experienced guide for the mountains, may be heard of.

Above Bobbio there is only a mule-path, 7 hrs.' walk to Abries.

[From Bobbio, a pass N. over the mountain by *Serra le Cruel* and the *Col Julien* leads to *Pralis* in 6 or 7 hrs. From La Tour this is a day's journey, and few excursions offer more striking scenes. Near the summit, 4 hrs.' hard walk from Bobbio, the *Monte Viso*, surmounting all the neighbouring ridges, appears so near that the path to the *Col de la Traversette*, on the side of France, can be distinctly traced. The descent towards *Pralis* is very long and fatiguing, 2 hrs.' hard walk. *Pralis* consists of 4 separate hamlets; there is no Inn, but at the 3rd of these strangers are received kindly at the pastor's house, if he has room. From *Pralis* down the valley to *Perosa* (Rte. 162) is 4 hrs. by a char-road.]

On leaving Bobbio a long wall is seen, an embankment made to guard the village from the inundations of the Pellice; it was built by a grant from Oliver Cromwell, during whose protectorate one of those fearful calamities nearly destroyed Bobbio. A little beyond, the river is crossed, and the mountain ascent begins; soon, on bending to the l., the scenery becomes wild, though the bottom is still occupied by water-meadows shaded here and there by walnut and chestnut trees. The last view down the valley towards Bobbio is very fine.

After a long course by strangely situated hamlets, where rocks and trees of the wildest character make up a rapid succession of picturesque scenes, the path reaches an abrupt steep, over which is poured the torrent of the Pellice, and further progress seems forbidden. Up amidst fallen fragments, however, a path is found, threading a deep ravine, in which are the ruins of the fort of *Mirabouc*, built against the escarpments of the mountain, in a gorge which is utterly impassable on the opposite side; nor is there a path on the side where the ruins of the fort stand that does not pass through its former gates. The fort was demolished after the wars of the French revolution, in 1796.

[A little before reaching Mirabouc, a valley towards the rt. leads to the village of Abriès by the *Col de Malaure*, a shorter but more difficult path than that by the *Col de la Croix*.]

Above the fort Mirabouc, a roughly pitched path through a narrow and sterile valley enters upon the meadows of the *Bergerie de Pra* (3 hrs. from Bobbio)—the highest hamlet in the valley, situated in the midst of fertile pasturages, where barley and potatoes are raised. Here the traveller may rest in a grange with more comfort than in many places of much greater pretension, and from this point, by continuing up the valley of the Pellice, he may reach the French side of Monte Viso by the *Col de Scyllières* (9247 ft.) at a much earlier hour than from Abriès; having crossed it, the distance is short to the *Col de la Traversette*, and this is the easiest détour by Monte Viso from the Val de Pellice to the valley of the Po.

[Those bound to the Val Vraita can reach the *Col di Vallante* in about 1½ hr. from the *Col de la Croix*.]

The lovers of the chase may find hunter's accommodation at the *Bergerie de Pra*. The abundance of chamois on the surrounding mountains, and the fine, honest character of the peasantry, are great temptations to its enjoyment.

The ascent to the *Col de la Croix* is by an exceedingly steep path called *La Cuhe*. The summit is reached in 1½ hr. from the *Bergerie*; and from the highest point (7611 ft.) there is a striking view of the defile of Mirabouc, and Monte Viso is a noble object. The pass is nearly level for half an hour, and then the track, traversing the side of a hollow, gradually falls to the valley of the Guil, within the territory of France. On the col there is a block of stone carved with the fleur-de-lis, and the cross of Savoy, to mark the frontier, and a little below it a rude *huspice*. At *La Monta*, in the valley of the Guil,

also called *Vallon de Viso*, is a station of the douane; the descent is very gradual for some way above a gorge called *Combe de la Croix*; and here and there traces of an intended road surveyed under Napoleon may be seen. On the rt., there is a den, miscalled an inn, at *La Monta*; thence, through the hamlet of *Ristolas*, and in 2½ hrs. from the top to

*Abriès* (a country *Inn*, *Étoile*, or *chez Richard*; fair quarters; but make your bargain beforehand), a town of 1525 Inhab. Here the torrent from *Valprévaire* flows into the Guil, and a path up its course leads to several mountain passes.

[Two passes, the *Col de Thures*, 7½ hrs. and *Col de la Mait* 8½ hrs., both practicable for horses, lead to *Cesanne*, and a third, the *Col de Malrif*, in 8 hrs. to *Briançon* by *Corvières*.]

Below Abriès the road, good for a light calèche, passes the valleys in which there are still Protestant communities, particularly that of *St. Veran* (Rte. 168), or *Val de Molines*, which joins from the l. the valley of the Guil, at *Villevieille* (*Inn*: *Éléphant*), and the valley of *Arvieux*, which enters that of the Guil near *Queyras*. To these, and the *Val Freissinières*, on the other side of the *Durance*, the name of the *Pays de Neff* has been given, to commemorate the services rendered to these communities by the Swiss Protestant minister, who devoted his life to renovating and sustaining the religious worship of the primitive Christians that had existed in these valleys from time immemorial. *Felix Neff*, like *Oberlin*, the good pastor of the *Ban de la Roche*, not only promoted the religious faith and practice of these people, but established schools, and taught them agriculture, and the elements of other useful knowledge. He died in 1829. His name throughout these valleys is remembered with the deepest reverence and affection. 2½ hrs. further is

The *Château de Queyras*, finely situated on an isolated crag: it is garrisoned, and entirely commands the

valley, and from every point of view presents a most picturesque appearance. *Inn*: Hotel de Puy-Est.

[From Chateau Queyras the *Col d'Izouard* (or d'Hyzoar) offers a direct and easy route to Briançon, char-road except between Cervières and Brunisart, a distance of less than 3 hrs. Close to the top (7827 ft.) is a hospice open throughout the year.]

Below Queyras a new road is open to Mont Dauphin. The old one skirts the deep bed of the river for a short way, then descending to the torrent, which it crosses, it continues for nearly 2 hrs., through a fine défilé. In some places the mountains seem to close in above the traveller; and it is often necessary to cross the Guil to find a path on one side, which is forbidden on the other by projecting rocks or precipices of vast height. From other points there is a magnificent view of Mont Pelvoux, at the head of the Val Louise. At length the road emerges, winds up a rugged steep, crosses the torrent of Seillac, and descends upon

Guillestre (with two *Inns*: Hotel Imbert—best), a little bourg, which was one of the stations, during the wars of Napoleon, for English prisoners. The *church* (built 1507–32) has a porch of 3 arches supported by slender pillars, which rest on lions of a mottled red marble.

A little below Guillestre, the road passes beneath the

*Fort of Mont Dauphin*, planned by Vauban and Catinat, which guards this entrance to France—a garrison singularly placed on a precipitous rock of conglomerate that is nearly insulated at the mouth of the Guil at its confluence with the Durance. The *Inn* (Café du Nord) is very good for Dauphiné, with reasonable charges and clean beds. There are also officers' lodgings which can be engaged by travellers. For the sake of these it may be worth while to ascend the steep hill on which the fort stands.

From the drawbridge you have a

fine view of Mont Pelvoux. Here the great route from Marseilles and Digne to Briançon is entered; and the course down the valley to *Embrun* (2 hrs.) is by an admirably formed and well-kept road. (See *Handbook for France*.)

If this excursion be commenced from the side of France the diligence from Briançon to Gap will drop the traveller at Mont Dauphin (5 or 6 hrs.' walk from Briançon). An omnibus will take him on to Guillestre. There he can hire a one-horse calèche for Abriès, stopping at Queyras to rest and dine. *Time*: Briançon to Guillestre, 4½ hrs. G. to Abriès, 6 hrs., exclusive of stops. *Avoid* making the journey between the 1st and 21st of July, that being the time allowed by the French Government for cutting wood in the forests—the horses are then all employed, and the charge for them is exorbitant: indeed it is so at all times.

## ROUTE 164.

### MONT DAUPHIN TO SALUZZO, BY THE COL DE LA TRAVERSESETTE.

| Mont Dauphin.             | Miles. |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Queyras . . . . .         | 15     |
| Abriès . . . . .          | 8      |
| Col de la Traversette . . | 13     |
| Crissolo . . . . .        | 7½     |
| Paesana . . . . .         | 8      |
| Saluzzo . . . . .         | 14     |

This is a fine pass leading past *Monte Viso*, and by the head-waters of the Po. Abriès to Crissolo 8 to 9 hrs. on foot.

From Mont Dauphin to Queyras the road passes through a magnificent ravine; thence to Abriès the scenery is tamer. From thence to Crissolo, in the valley of the Po, the pass is only for pedestrians. To the S. of it nearer Monte Viso, is a higher pass, called the *Col del Porro*.

From Mont Dauphin to Abriès (Rte. 163).

After passing *Ristolas*, and ascending to *La Monta*—where the path to the Col de la Croix turns off l., that

to the head of the Val Vraita by the *Col de la Ruine* rt.—the route towards Monte Viso continues up the valley of the Guil to the highest village, *La Chalp*, about a mile and a half above *La Monta*. At *La Chalp* guides may be obtained.

The valley of the *Guil* above *Abriès* is narrow and savage: bare and precipitous escarpments descend to the torrent, and form its left boundary: the bed of the *Guil* is filled with enormous rocks. The path ascends the rt. bank over steep acclivities and pasturages abounding in rare plants. Above these the head of the Monte Viso is continually presented, filling the open space formed by the sides of the valley. The highest *bergerie*, probably nearly 8000 ft. above the sea, affords a tolerable refuge. Attempts to ascend Monte Viso from this side have been hitherto unsuccessful (1878).

[From this point a pedestrian may reach Bobbio in 5 hrs., and *La Tour de Luserne* in 7 hrs. by the *Col de Seylières*, descending into the head of the Val Pellice. To the rt. diverges the path to Val Vraita by the *Col di Vallante* (Rte. 166).]

Above the *Bergerie du Monviso* the pasturages are left and the ascent lies over a track rudely paved with large stones. This has been several times repaired so as to enable mules to pass, but fresh damage is constantly arising, and during some summers the snow lies low on both sides of the pass. The paved road extends to the *Gallery of the Traversette*, pierced through the mountain 250 feet below the crest. Its entrance, long closed by the fallen débris of the precipices, has been cleared of all obstacles, and opened out so as to render this pass easy to ordinary pedestrians. The tunnel is 250 ft. long, 10 ft. high, and 10 ft. wide.

Documents existing at Saluzzo prove that the *Pertus du Viso*, as the tunnel is called, was excavated, 1480, by Ludovico II., Marquis of Saluzzo; who, with a spirit beyond his age, undertook this extraordinary work for the commercial interests of his

people, by making a route three days shorter than any other from Saluzzo to Dauphiné. By treaty with René, king of Provence, who contributed towards the expenses on his side of the mountain, this road was opened to receive from France, by laden mules, salt, drapery, and metal wares, in return for nut-oil, wine, rice, and flax from the marquisate of Saluces. By means of this gallery, and the roads constructed as approaches, this intercourse was open 6 or 8 months in the year. The gallery was begun in 1478, and completed in 1480;—an extraordinary work to accomplish in that time, as the labourers could only work, at that height, about 4 or 5 months in the year. It greatly facilitates the passage, though the perpendicular height saved is only some 270 ft.

The gallery has frequently been buried under rocks—in 1620, 1676, 1798, 1812, 1823—but the fallen masses were removed by the people of the communes on either side of the mountain. It is closed by snow after severe winters.

From the *col* the view down the valley of the Po, and over the plains of Italy, is pre-eminently beautiful. From a height of 9800 ft. above the sea the eye follows the mountain vista to a level expanse, which extends at least 100 m. to the horizon, and is studded with bright but indistinct spots, marking the positions of the towns of Piedmont. In contrast to this vague and far-stretching distance, the rocks of *Monte Viso* rise grandly over the head of the traveller nearly 3000 ft. To gain a view of the Alps towards the north, it is necessary to descend a little towards Italy, and then mount an eminence on the l. which before obscured that part of the chain: but this is only recommended to those who have time to spare, which few have who wish to gain *Paesana* or *Abriès* before nightfall.

The traveller who would enjoy this view should leave *Abriès* so as to be on the *col* by 10 o'clock or earlier, before the mid-day vapours rise in

the plains and valley of the Po, and obscure the prospect. This can only be made certain by starting soon after 4 in the morning, or better still, by sleeping at La Monta, or at one of the chalets. At the chalet of La Trouchet, in the bottom of the valley, near the point where it is quitted to ascend the col, clean straw or hay may be had for bed, and ewe's milk curd for food. This chalet is half-way in time between Abries and the col,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from each.

The Col de la Traversette is a mere ridge, so narrow that it is crossed in a few paces. On it are remains of a redoubt; and during the wars of the Revolution many struggles were made and skirmishes fought for its possession.

Some, with no better foundation than the fact that the plains of the Po could be seen from the pass, have supposed that this was the route of Hannibal; but the same authority who records his having shown the plain to his army states that the army encamped on the summit, and waited there three days for stragglers. Here, 100 men could not have encamped, and the track must ever have been impracticable to elephants, and even horses.

Down a steep and difficult path the traveller has to proceed towards the valley of the Po; but there is nothing that would strike even an inexperienced traveller as dangerous. About 1000 ft. below the col a mass of rock is turned abruptly, and on the rt. opens a scene which is perhaps the finest on the pass. One of the peaks of Monte Viso rises magnificently from the side of a deep valley, in which are some little dark lakes, the sources of the Po, and below them the river is seen to trickle in a silver line down the black rocks, from the base of the Viso into the valley beyond. Nothing can exceed the impression of solitude and grandeur made by this scene. At length, however, the savage wildness of the summit is passed, and vegetation is reached in a beautiful plain covered with the rich herbage. This spot is

called the *Piano del Re*, and on it an *Albergo Alpino*, well spoken of, has been opened.

A short descent from the Piano del Re leads to another little plain, the *Piano di Fiorenza*, so named from its beautiful flowers. Nearly 2 m. below it is the first hamlet, *Piano Malzé*, a name derived from a forest of larches (*melesi*), which formerly covered it. Here is the douane. About 3 m. further the traveller reaches the highest village, *Crissolo*, with several humble inns (4544 ft.). Ten minutes distant on the N. hillside is the Sanctuary of San Chiaffredo, commanding a noble view of Monte Viso and the bare downs and wooded glens at its base. The adjoining hospice is now a large *Inn*, with fair food, but during the pilgrimage month (September) generally over-crowded, noisy and dirty. The local saint was a member of the Theban legion, who escaped the massacre at St. Maurice to lay here his wonder-working bones, which are now the objects of a pilgrimage, which probably dates from pre-Christian times and is a survival of river-worship. The present church was built in 1551 by the French, then masters of the marquise.

There is a large cavern, the *Balma di Rio Martino*, in the limestone hillside S. of the village. It has many chambers and some curious stalactites.

Below Crissolo there is some charming scenery in the valley of the Po. Crissolo is an admirable centre for excursions, and is destined to future celebrity.

Those most to be recommended are

*To the sources of the Po and ascent of the Visomout.*

The path leading to the Col de la Traversette is followed as far as the Piano del Re. Here the traveller mounts to the l. to the Lac de Fiorenza—600 yds. long by 200 yds. broad—on which a boat has been placed. A rough ascent past several smaller tarns leads to the Col de Costa Grinde, the lowest point in the brow connecting

the Visomout with the great mountain, to which it serves as a Hörnli. It is accessible in 1 hr. from the col, and well repays ascent. From the col, leaving several more tarns to the l., a track descends to join the path to the Passo delle Sagnette. The whole excursion from Crissolo, including the Visomout, will take 8 to 10 hrs.

The *Monte Frioland* (9300 ft. (?)), 4 to 5 hrs. To those who hesitate to climb Monte Viso this prominent summit in the range N. of Crissolo offers probably the best panoramic view of the plain and the great circle of the Alps, including the peaks of Dauphiné. Horses could certainly be taken to within an hour of the top. A pedestrian might find a beautiful walk by descending directly to La Tour in Val Pellice.

For further information travellers are referred to Signor C. Isaia's 'Al Mon Viso,' one of the excellent local Handbooks published by members of the Italian Alpine Club. The distances in it are somewhat exaggerated.

*Monte Viso* (12,605 ft.), the highest point of the Cottian Alps, was first ascended, 1861, by Messrs. W. Matthews and F. W. Jacomb, with the guides J. B. Croz and Michel Croz of Chamonix. They ascended on the S. side by the ridge which divides the valleys of Vallante and Forciolline; Mr. Tuckett, who made the second ascent in 1862, started from some lakes near the head of the latter valley. An active climber will find it possible to make the ascent in the day from Crissolo, but it is usual to sleep at the Alpetto chalets 2 hrs. above the village. The S. base of the peak is reached by the Passo delle Sagnette. The climb under ordinary conditions offers little difficulty to fair cragsmen, and is now frequently accomplished. There are several competent guides to be heard of at Paesana or Crissolo (Re, Michele Gontero (father and son), and several of the family Perotti recommended: Monte Viso 20 fr.). The mountain is exceedingly steep, and cut by deep rents, and must be scaled along couloirs and precipitous faces of rock.

To the E. it throws out a spur which divides the Po and its tributary the Lenta; to the S.E. it joins the mountains dividing the valleys of the Po and Stura; S. is the ridge of the Petit Viso; and towards the S.W. the range which divides the valleys of the Guil and Ubaye. Monte Viso is mentioned by Pomp. Mela and Pliny as the source of the Po, and Virgil takes his wild boar from the pine-bearing *Vesulus*.

Now that there is tolerable accommodation at Crissolo, the best way to make the tour of Monte Viso is to take a guide from that village and cross the ridge separating the Po from the Lenta; climb the slope of debris to the *Passo delle Sagnette*, at the head of Val Forciolline; descend that valley, and pass round the Petit Viso to Val Vallante; then over the *Col di Vallante* to the valley of the Guil; and back by the Traversette to the valley of the Po. This tour was first effected in 1839 by Prof. Forbes in 14 hrs., starting from the valley of the Guil on the French side. It is a severe day's work.

[Above the confluence of the Lenta is the village of *Oncino*, in a striking situation between the two rivers. The view from it of the valley of the Po, and the plains of Piedmont, is singularly fine. Passes lead from it to the Val Vraita.]

*Paesana* (*Inns*: Alb. Araldo, pretty good; Rosa Rossa) is about 3 hrs. from Crissolo. It is a large town, with 5000 Inhab. Desiderius, king of the Lombards, who was defeated by Charlemagne, and kept prisoner for a long time at Vienne, in Dauphiné, was permitted at last to take up his residence at Paesana.

[A tolerable road branches off to *Barge*—(*Inn*: Lion d'Or, good and cheap)—and passes through a beautiful and rich country, by Bibiena and S. Giovanni, to Lucerna and La Tour (Rte. 163).]

Between Paesana and Saluzzo are

*Sanfront* (Inhab. above 5000) and the villages of Gambasca and Mar-

tiniana. At the latter, the valley, widening to the plain, is altogether left by the traveller, and for the remaining distance of 6 or 7 m., the road, skirting the mountain, runs on a level to

*Saluces* (Ital. *Saluzzo*) (Inns: Corona Grossa, good; H. du Coq), a town of 15,814 Inhab. Not much to be seen here. *Cathedral*, 1480. The old *Castle* of the Marquises of Saluces, above the town, is now a prison. Fine view from its terrace. In one of the squares, a statue of *Silvio Pellico*, author of 'Mie Prigionieri,' born here 1789. Fine fruits—peaches, figs. Rly. hence to Turin by Savigliano in 1½ hr.

### ROUTE 165.

ABRIÈS TO CUNEO, BY THE COL DI VALLANTE AND VAL VRAITA OR VAL MAIRA.

This route leads through very beautiful and grand scenery, which has been much neglected by tourists. The Monte Viso juts out towards Italy from the main chain of the Cottian Alps in the form of a bastion, of which the acute inner angle belongs to France, and sends its waters to the Guil. The N.E. face rises above the head of the valley of the Po, while the S. face sends its waters through various secondary valleys to the Val Vraita.

The summit of Monte Viso being considered the salient angle of the bastion, the pass of the Traversette lies N.W. of it, the Col di Vallante, immediately W., crossing the S. face of the bastion.

From Abriès to a short distance below the Bergerie de Monviso the route is the same as in Rte. 164. At that point, instead of turning up to the l., the main valley is followed for ¼ hr. towards the highest peak of the mountain. The scenery here is very fine. The head of the valley forms an amphitheatre; in the nearly level bottom snow lies for 9 or 10

months of the year; and around, especially towards the summit of the mountain, precipitous faces of rock alternate with shelving snow-slopes. Notwithstanding the height of Mte. Viso (12,605 ft.), none but small glaciers of the second order are formed about it, partly because of its extreme steepness, partly because the climate is very sensibly warmer than that of Switzerland or northern Piedmont.

The ascent to the *Col di Vallante* commences up débris mingled with snow at the base of some vertical rocks. It will be advisable to take one of the shepherds from the last chalets to show the way, as it may very easily be missed. Above the débris is an extensive snow ridge, over which the course bears somewhat to the rt. or E. of S., till the traveller suddenly finds himself on the summit, at the upper margin of a steep hollow channel, or couloir, the bottom of which is filled with snow.

The descent, though steep, presents no difficulty to a practised mountaineer, nor will he require a guide beyond the summit. Care must be taken to keep to the rt. side of the ravine which commences below the snow-slopes. The pass is about 9500 ft.; and the vertical height descended to reach the chalets of Ponte in *Val Vallante* must be very considerable. At these chalets a traveller may find shelter for the night, with milk, cheese, &c.; and for those making the tour of Monte Viso, such quarters, however poor, are convenient. Care is necessary to avoid mistakes arising from the name Ponte being applied to different places in this neighbourhood. The principal place so named is *Ponte Chianale*, the chief village in the N. branch of the Val Vraita. There is also the small hamlet of *Orstelponze*, 2 hrs. below Ponte Chianale, at the junction of the Val Vallante with the Val de Chianale, and the chalets above mentioned.

A short distance below the chalets trees begin to appear, and the scenery of the lower part of the Val Vallante is very beautiful, the charm being enhanced by its contrast with

the bare and savage rocks of the higher glens of Monte Viso. From Castelponte there is a rough mule-path to Casteldelfino; but there are footpaths which make the way shorter and pleasanter. In 9 hrs. from Abries the traveller reaches

*Casteldelfino* (Château Dauphin), the chief village of the upper Val Vraita (*Iuns*: Lion d'Or, tolerable; Salita del Monviso). The position is very beautiful; and if the accommodation were better, it would be an excellent place for headquarters. It is one of the starting-points for the ascent of Monte Viso, and there are some guides who know the mountain. The *Val Vraita*, which runs due E. for 20 m. from hence to Venasca, where it opens out into the plain, differs in character from the neighbouring valleys. Being less contracted, it has fine open pastures, extensive pine-forests on the mountain slopes, and some tillage in the bottom of the valley. Above Casteldelfino it is separated into two branches by the ridge descending from the *Grand Rioburent*, 11,142 ft., one of the highest peaks S. of Monte Viso. [The N. branch, or Val di Chianale, leads by the *Col de la Ruine* and Monta, or *Col de Ristolas* and Ristolas to Abries; by the *Col del Agnello* or *Col de St. Veran* to Villevieille and Queyras (Rte. 163). The former pass (8 hrs.) is an excellent mule-path with a hospice close to the summit, where good beds are provided. The scenery is agreeable throughout. The *Col de Louyet* or *Col du Loup* leads to Barcelonnette, through the valley of the Ubaye (Rte. 168). All these passes are nearly 9000 ft. in height. The S. branch, or Val di Bellino, communicates by the *Col de Lautaret* and other passes with the valley of the Ubaye. N. of Casteldelfino, three lateral glens lead to the valley of the Po, by the *Col di S. Chiaffredo*, *Col di Costa Rossa*, and *Col delle Sagnette*. The last is the nearest to Monte Viso. It lies at the head of the *Val Forciolline*, which branches rt. from the Val Vallante at the foot of the Petit Viso.]

[*Switz.*]

From Casteldelfino it is 7 m. by a road too rough to be passable by carriages to *Sampyre*, the chief village in Val Vraita, with a tolerable *Iun* (*Croix Blanche*), and from thence it is a dusty drive of 10 m. to *Venasca*. This is about 10 m. either from *Saluzzo*, or from the *Muddulena* stat. on the rly. from Turin to Cuneo.

#### VAL MAIRA.

Those who wish to see more of this region of the Alps should cross the ridge S. of Casteldelfino, separating the valleys of Vraita and Maira. The ascent to the Col della Bicocca is very beautiful, partly through pine-forest, partly through open pastures covered with rare and beautiful alpine plants. It is but a slight détour to ascend nearly due S., reaching the ridge a little to the E. of the actual col, 7611 ft. The views in the ascent, and from the summit, are very beautiful. Monte Viso is of course the most conspicuous object, but in many other directions rugged ranges are seen, whose very existence is unknown to the generality of alpine travellers. W. of the col is a fine rocky peak, the *Pelvo di Elva*, 10,115 ft. in height, which must command a still finer view.

From the summit of the ridge there is a path leading down to a small cluster of poor houses, at the head of a ravine which runs due S. to the main valley. Like the Val Maira itself, these tributary valleys or ravines are extremely abrupt, so that it is a matter of labour and difficulty, often an impossibility, to cross them. It is therefore necessary to decide in time whether the traveller intends to steer for *Prazzo*, the highest village in Val Maira, where tolerable quarters are to be found, or whether he proposes to reach on the same day *S. Damiano*, at the lower end of the valley. In either case a considerable détour is rendered necessary by the steepness of all the mountain slopes. The course to Prazzo lies to the rt. of the main ravine; that to Stroppio, for the

lower part of the Val Maira, after a rapid descent, goes to the l. by the village of *Elva*. The scenery throughout bears comparison with many districts of far greater celebrity; and the view of the ranges of the Maritime Alps, from a projecting eminence, which must be crossed by a short ascent from the village of *Elva*, is most striking. *Stroppo* lies more than a thousand feet below the level of *Casteldelfino*, yet the river runs in a deep ravine which it has cut out of the yielding strata. *Stroppo* has a very small *Inn*. At the next village, *Alma*, there are two *Inns*, both very mean, so that it is better to push on to *S. Damiano*, about 3 hrs. from *Stroppo*. The walk should, if possible, be taken either early or late, as it is oppressively hot during the daytime. Yet it would be a loss to pass such beautiful scenery in the dark; and the track is so extremely rough that it would be disagreeable, and even dangerous in places where it is a mere narrow shelf cut out of a precipitous slope.

*S. Damiano* is a large and thriving village (*H. du Soleil*, good), where a 1-horse vehicle may be hired (12 fr.) to the rly. stat. at *Cuneo* in about 3 hrs., passing through the country towns of *Dronero* (*Inn*: *Corona Grossa*) and *Caraglio*.

[Hence a char-road leads to *Val Grana*, 3 m., the chief place of the valley of the same name, a narrow and rocky glen scarcely known to strangers, but offering, it is said, fine scenery. At *Monterosso* the road ends. Hence mule-paths lead to the adjoining valleys. The most frequented is the *Col del Mulo* (8422 ft.), 9 hrs., to *Stroppo* in *Val Maira*.]

## ROUTE 166.

CUNEO TO EMBRUN, BY THE COL DE L'ARGENTIÈRE AND BARCELONNETTE.

*Cuneo* (See *Rte. 170*).

A carriage-road, except for the

9 m. between *Bersesio* and *Larche*. Mule-path across the pass.

The *Stura*, one of the largest affluents of the *Po*, issues from an open valley opposite *Borgo San Dalmazzo*, where the high road to *Nice* is left, and the course up the valley of the *Stura* is by a good road as far as *Vinadio*, the principal bourg in the valley, from which the mineral springs of *Vinadio* may be visited.

This pass has great interest to students of military history, as the scene of one of the most remarkable passages of the Alps ever executed by an army. In August 1515, a French army of 21,000 men, with 72 large cannons, 500 small pieces carried on mule-back, and 20,000 lansquenets, crossed in 3 days the *Col de l'Argentière*. Their vanguard, a column of cavalry under the Lord d'Imbercourt and the Chevalier Bayard, descending suddenly by *Rocca Sparviera*, surprised the Papal general Prospero Colonna at table in *Villa Franca*, near the headwaters of the *Po*, and made him prisoner, with a band of 700 knights, coming down on him so suddenly that he asked if they had dropped from the clouds (see p. 516).

In ascending the valley of the *Stura* from *S. Dalmazzo*, the first hamlet is *S. Martino*; soon after passing it the river appears in its deep bed; and beyond it, rising abruptly amidst some pinnacled rocks and precipices, the village of *Rocca Sparviera*.

Soon after passing *Rocca Sparviera* the road winding down crosses the *Stura*, and continues on its left bank almost throughout the valley. The cultivated land is rich and luxuriant: the chestnut-trees are of great magnitude; and the forms of the mountains beautiful.

About 12 m. from *S. Dalmazzo*, or 17 m. from *Cuneo*, the traveller reaches

*Demonte* (*Inns*: *Fleur de Lys*, poor; *della Porta*; *Spada Reale*), a town formerly remarkable for its fort, which guarded the passage to France by the *Col de l'Argentière*; it was built by Charles Emanuel I.

in the 16th cent., upon the ruins of a very old castle razed by the Austrians in 1559. It has been memorable for its sieges in almost every war between France and Sardinia. In that of 1744, when the Spanish and French armies, commanded by the infante Don Philip and the Prince of Condé, invaded Piedmont, they forced the narrow pass of the Barricades, descended the valley, and took the fort by the use of red-hot shot. Afterwards they besieged Cuneo, and fought a battle which they won from Charles Emanuel III., who succeeded, however, in throwing supplies into the city, which was gallantly defended. After a tedious investment, the storms of autumn and the want of supplies—which were cut off by the peasantry—compelled the allies to raise the siege and recross the Alps towards the latter end of November, when they suffered the severest privations from cold, hunger, and fatigue. Though pursued by the troops, and assailed by the peasants, yet they returned to France, over frozen roads, and through deep snow, with all their artillery, and with a few guns taken from their enemies,—the trophies for which they had sacrificed thousands of lives and millions of treasure: on their way they destroyed the fort of Demonte. It was again restored, but finally demolished in 1801, when Piedmont having become a part of France, the forts that guarded the frontier were razed. Since the restoration of Piedmont the reconstruction of many has been contemplated, some begun, and this among them. The mound upon which the ruins stand is situated in the middle of the valley,—the river passing on one side and the road on the other. From Demonte to

*Vinadio* (*Inn*: H. d'Italia), 24 m. from S. Dalmazzo. The scenery is highly picturesque,—a charm for which it is much indebted to the magnificent old trees which form foregrounds to beautiful views of the river and the mountains; and these are heightened by the festoons of

vines and gourds which decorate the branches. From Vinadio the view down the valley is particularly fine.

About an hour above Vinadio, at a place called Pianche, the ravine of the Val della Traversa, with a cascade at its entrance, opens on the left. In this ravine, at an hr.'s walk from Pianche, are the *Baths of Vinadio*—a humble and sequestered establishment. The gorge which leads to them is in some places very grand, and abounds in cascades.

Above Vinadio the change is rapid to wild and Alpine scenery, varying from a road by the stream which ripples through quiet meadows, to a track overhanging the course of the torrent, in a ravine too narrow for a path: it is therefore carried on ledges of the precipices above, and forms, in some places, a fearful passage for a mule. Such scenes are observed near Sambuco. Above are the villages of Pied de Port (Pietraporzio), and Ponte Bernardo. In a narrow defile called *Le Barricade*, the *Barricades*—where defences of the valley were formerly erected, and which were often the scene of desperate conflicts—the road is carried along a shelf of rock cut out of precipices which darken and overhang the ravine, and offer an almost impregnable barrier to the passage of the valley. Beyond the Barricades the road, or rather path, lies amidst the *débris* of the mountains, and offers a scene of wild desolation. Higher up are the villages of Praynard and Bersesio; the latter is the principal place between the Barricades and the Col de l'Argentière. Here the carriage-road ends (1878), and accommodation may be found.

*Bersesio*, 13½ m. from Vinadio, has a very tolerable mountain *Inn*. Above it the scenery is wild and rugged, the mountains crested by pinnacles of rock, blighted and scathed. Still, in the valley, barley is cultivated, and the pastures are rich; and the villages of Argentière (Argentera) and La Madeleine are found, where there is a poor little *Inn*. Soon afterwards the path leads abruptly to the *Col de l'Argentière*, also

called *Col della Maddalena*, 6545 ft. above the sea. Before arriving at it, the path skirts a little lake, the source of the Stura, called *La Madeleine*: it is about 600 or 700 ft. across. This lake is supposed to be the source also of the Ubayette, a stream on the side of France; for, at a short distance from the col on that side, and a little below the level of the lake, the spring which gushes out is believed to communicate with the lake.

From the summit the view is very extensive, especially towards France, down the course of the Ubayette towards Larche, the frontier station of the French douane. *Larche* is 9 m., or nearly 3 hours, from Bersesio; it has two small *Inns* (H. des Alpes; H. d'Italie), and *Meyronne*, lower down, has another (*chez Penant*), pretty comfortable, and kept by civil people; but provisions in this neighbourhood are scarce. From Larche the new carriage-road, which is to be carried over the mountains into the valley of the Stura, is open to Barcelonnette, 14½ m. To Meyronnes, where there is an excellent guide named Dumas, is an hour's walk, and thence to Barcelonnette ¾ hrs. Below Larche there is little interest in the scenery. The road descends through the villages of Certamusa and Meyronnes to the junction of the Ubayette with the Ubaye, where two roads lead into the Embrunnais,—the principal following the course of the Ubaye to Barcelonnette, the other leading N. by the camp of Tournoux, the village of St. Paul, and the *Col de Vars*, to Guillestre and the valley of the Durance.

The scenery is fine where these roads separate. Châtelard, a well-cultivated little plain, is left on the rt., and the road passes on by Jausier, where, at the Pont de Cluse, a rocky defile offers some striking points of view.

The Col de l'Argentière has an historic interest. In 1515 Francis I., with an army of 20,000 men, succeeded in passing it to meet the Swiss and other foes at Marignano. The allies had got the start of the French by occupying Susa and the gorges communicating

with Mont Cenis and the Mont Genève, so that Francis was obliged either to make a very great détour or to find or make some other direct passage. Information obtained from hunters and shepherds by the Signor Soleir, lord of Morette, induced him to select the pass leading from Barcelonnette to the sources of the Stura and the country of Saluzzo. The valleys were explored by the Marshals Lautrec and Trivulzio and by Pedro Navarro, who undertook not only to conduct the infantry, but all the artillery, consisting of 72 large pieces and 300 small. This was successfully achieved after great difficulty, the guns requiring to be swung by rope from rock to rock, where neither bridge could be built nor a passage made by blasting; and on the third day the army encamped on the crest of the ridge. The Rocher de St. Paul, near Barcelonnette, which barred the road, was blasted in a single day by P. Navarro, one of the first engineers who practised military mining. But this was the easiest part of the task; far more arduous was it, on the edge of sloping crags smoothed by avalanches and slippery with ice, to plant and to fasten the timber props on which frail bridges could be reared to cross the torrents, and against the face of precipices and over gulfs, to erect scaffoldings which horses, mules, and heavy cannon could venture to cross. In some cases this was impossible, and the only alternative was to let down the gun by ropes into the gorge on one side and raise it up on the other. All these and many more difficulties were overcome; on the third day the army camped on the summit of the pass, on the fourth the obstacles of the Passo di Porco were surmounted, and on the fifth the French were pouring like a torrent over the plains of Saluzzo.

*Barcelonnette* (*Inns*: H. du Nord; H. de France), with 2000 Inhab., is situated on the rt. bank of the Ubaye, shut in by mountains—N. the *Castello*, S. the *Roche Pointue*. It is

better built than one would expect to find in a valley so sequestered. In the principal street a fountain bears a bronze bust of Ant. Manuel, the orator of the Restoration. Barcelonnette is chiefly inhabited by proprietors of the alps and pasturages of the valley. To these more than 100,000 sheep are brought, during the summer, from the vast plains of La Crau, in the neighbourhood of Arles, and are driven into the most difficult accessible pasturages, often 20 days' journey. From their wool some coarse goods, consumed chiefly by the inhabitants, are made. Corn is grown in the valley; but for almost everything else the natives are indebted to strangers; it is not long that the cultivation of potatoes has been practised among them.

This valley was known to the Romans, but little of its history is to be relied upon, except in connection with that of Embrun, which has been better preserved. It is known that it was subjected to irruptions by Saracens, who made their way from Marseilles, or Fraxinetum, on the Gulf of St. Tropez.

In the sixth century, a convent of Benedictines established here did much to ameliorate the condition of the inhabitants; but all the wars in which Provence has been engaged have extended their horrors to this valley, and it was often laid waste by the Saracens, particularly in the 10th century. From the 14th it was alternately subject to Savoy or France. Amadeus VII. conquered it in 1388; it was reattached to Provence by René of Anjou in 1447; it was again taken by the duke of Savoy, Charles III., in 1537. In the middle of the 16th century the inhabitants adopted the Reformed doctrines, but they were shortly after either forced to abjure them or were expelled their country.

Napoleon contemplated the construction of a road through the valley of Barcelonnette to pass the Col de l'Argentière and enter Piedmont by the Val della Stura, and this is now being carried into effect.

[There are many communications with the neighbouring valleys by mountain passes; as with Embrun by the Col de la Vachère, with Colmar and Allos (Rte. 168), and with Nice by the valleys of the Tinea and the Var.]

Soon after leaving Barcelonnette, near the village of St. Pons, the ruins of a castle and a ch. are seen in a fine situation. The first large village is Les Thuiles, and the next, after crossing the Ubaye by a wooden bridge, Méolans; from which there are two passes to Embrun; the Col de l'Eysalotte, N.E., the Col de Dormillouse, N.W. Lower down, amid dreary and wild scenes, the general character of the valley of Barcelonnette, there is one striking exception in a village, beautifully situated, called

*Le Lauzet (Inn: H. de l'Europe)*, the Goshen of the valley. It is agreeably wooded; near it is a little lake which abounds in trout, and in the immediate neighbourhood are fruit-trees and a fertile soil. A little way below, however, the scene changes again to sterility. After crossing a ridge, a series of tourniquets leads down the pass of La Tour, or, as it is called, the *Chemin Royal*. Below it the valley offers some of its most wild and grand scenes. On looking back from the road which is carried high above the torrent, the Ubaye is seen issuing from the defile of La Tour, and beyond it the grand form of the *Cugulion des Trois Evêques*, which divides the valley of Barcelonnette from that of the Var: the scene is one of savage dreariness.

The road continues on the l. bank high above the river; until, leaving the side of the hill upon which the fort of St. Vincent is placed, it leads down to the little village of Ubaye.

From this place, one road passes down by the Ubaye to its confluence with the Durance at La Brioule; and another ascends, N., the side of the mountain to the Col de Pontis, leading to Savines on the Durance, in the high-road from Gap to Embrun, which is distant from Savines 6 m.

From the road to the Col de Pontis, the hill of St. Vincent is a strikingly fine object, surmounted by forts which guarded the entrance to the valley of Barcelonnette, when it belonged to Sardinia. By a wise arrangement it was ceded to France, in exchange for the valleys of Pragelas and Exilles, when France and Sardinia agreed upon the chain of the high Alps as their line of demarcation.

*Embrun* (Inns: H. de la Poste; H. de Milan), a town of 4183 Inhab. (See *Handbook for France*.)

### ROUTE 167.

DIGNE, IN THE VALLEY OF THE DURANCE, TO BARCELONNETTE, BY COLMARS AND ALLOS.

| Digne                        | miles.    |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Thorame . . . . .            | 21        |
| Colmars . . . . .            | 8         |
| Allos . . . . .              | 5½        |
| Uvemet (mule-path) . . . . . | 15½       |
| Barcelonnette . . . . .      | 2½        |
|                              | <hr/> 52½ |

The traveller from Marseilles who approaches the Alps by Digne, may enter them by an interesting line of railway, and pass through scenes little known to English ramblers.

From *Digne Station* (Inns: Boyer; du Commerce; du Nord) a carriage-road through a valley of Alpine character, and therefore welcome as an escape from the parched plains of France, leads by the village of Draire to the *Col de la Sine*, where there are refreshing green pasturages, 12 m. from Digne: thence the road leads down through sun-burnt valleys, rather resembling those of the north of Spain than of France. After crossing the Séoune the village *Château Garnier*, with a poor Inn, is passed. The traveller reaches the valley of the Verdon at Thorame Basse; 2 m. further is

*Thorame Haute* (Inns: Pascal; du Nord). There is some good glass in the church.

The road mounts the rt. side of the stony valley of the Verdon to

*Colmars* (Inns: chez Veuve Roux; chez Gautier), 4130 ft., 1000 Inhab., a small fortified town, which commands the entrance to a gorge, and was, with Barcelonnette, formerly in the possession of the Piedmontese Government. It is still garrisoned, and its gates are shut at 9 P.M. with as much regularity as when it was a more important station. From *Château Garnier* to Colmars is 3½ hrs. A little above the town, in the valley, there is a small intermittent spring. Still further up the valley of the Verdon, 1½ hr. above Colmars, is the little town of

*Allos*, 4675 ft. above the sea, in a high Alpine valley, surrounded by lofty mountains. (Auberge Pascal, poor but obliging people.) The neighbourhood of Allos is scarcely known to English travellers, but it well deserves their attention. [An excursion should be made to the *Lac d'Allos*, a distance of about 4 hrs. E. by the village of Champ Richard. The lake is one of the largest and most profound in the French Alps, though it is situated at the height of 7346 English feet. Its form is almost circular, its circumference nearly 4 miles, and for about 1000 ft. above it rises the *Mont Pelat* (10,017 ft.). It is a wild and sequestered spot. The neighbouring mountains are covered with snow, below which are stunted pines hanging from precipices and deep ravines. The lake is remarkable for its outlet, by which the water passes underground for 1500 feet; it then bursts into the valley, but, after foaming down a succession of cascades, meanders in gentleness and beauty through pasturages rich in vegetation. Barcelonnette may be reached in 7 hrs. from the Lac d'Allos by the mule-path of the Col d'Allos and Col de Fours.] From Allos to Barcelonnette the route lies up the valley of the Verdon, and after passing the village of *La Four*, and crossing a stone bridge, the path to the *Col de Fours* (7382 ft.), which divides the valley of Verdon from that

of the Ubaye, is soon gained. It is a fine pasturage to the summit, and from it a charming view is suddenly presented on looking up the valley of the Ubaye. The descent from the col is steep but exceedingly romantic, leading down through a valley of great boldness, richly wooded. *Barcelonnette* (Rte. 166) may be reached on foot in 6 hours from Allos. [In descending from the col, the valley of the torrent Bachelard opens on the rt., flanked by grand precipices; it leads E. to St. Dalmas le Sauvage, and thence to St. Étienne (S. Stefano), in the valley of the Tinea. From St. Étienne the traveller may cross the *Col della Lombarda*, or the *Col di Sta. Anna*, to the Baths of Vinadio, in the valley of the Stura, in Piedmont (Rte. 166).]

# ROUTE 168.

## BARCELONNETTE TO BRIANÇON, BY THE VALLEY OF THE UBAYE AND ST. VERAN.

Besides the three routes from the valley of the Ubaye to Embrun, by *Barcelonnette*, the *Col de la Vachère*, and the *Col de Vars* and *Guillestre*, there is another, by which the traveller may reach the valley of the Guil, and visit wild and sequestered scenes in the neighbourhood of *Monte Viso*. To *St. Paul*, 15 m., there is a carriage-road, impracticable for mules, only fit for a pedestrian; at least this is the case with the pass of the *Col de Longet*.

About 10 m. above *Barcelonnette* lies the confluence of the *Ubayette* and the *Ubaye*; the former leading to the *Col de l'Argentière*, the latter to the *Embrunnais* by the valley of *Maurin*.

The ascent of the *Ubaye* leads by a deep ravine below the camp of *Tourneaux*, where the remains of redoubts and intrenchments still mark the importance of this frontier passage: in the early part of the 18th century, when the valley of *Barcelonnette*

belonged to *Sardinia*, this spot was the scene of many struggles. The new road passes through a fine gorge into the basin-shaped valley of *St. Paul* (H. Hellion). Before reaching the village, the path by the *Col de Vars* to *Guillestre* and *Embrun* winds up the deep ravine of the *Rioumonas*, a torrent which descends from the *Col de Vars* and the villages of *Le Serrel* and *l'Entraye*; this pass is easy, and by it the distance from *St. Paul* to *Guillestre* is little more than 5 hrs.

Above *St. Paul* the valley narrows again and continues like a ravine until it expands into the commune of *Maurin*, a name given to the three villages of *Majasset*, *La Barge*, and *Combe Brémond*. The road is practicable for charrs to the highest hamlet. Beyond that is a mule-path.

*Majasset* (a poor and dear *lun*) is about 4 hrs. walk from the confluence of the *Ubaye* and *Ubayette*, 6½ hrs. from *Barcelonnette*, and at the foot of a pass to *Ceillac* and *Guillestre* by the *Col de Ste. Anne*, E. of the *Pointe de Ste. Anne* (11,278 ft.). As it is possible, it will be wise to sleep here, and a trusty guide should be engaged (the services of the innkeeper *Cressy* may be obtained) to cross the *Col* to *St. Veran*. Near *Maurin* they have begun to work serpentine as ornamental stone, and between this valley and that of the *Guil* serpentine and diallage constantly occur. Three or four passes across the great chain lead on the right into *Piedmont*. 1, the *Col de Maurin* into the valley of the *Maira* to *Dronero*; 2, the *Col de Lautaret* or *Chabrière*, and *Col de Malecoste* to *Casteldelfino* in the *Val Vraita*; and 3, the eastern *Col de Longet*, from the head of the valley of the *Ubaye* to *PonteChianale* in *Val Vraita*. There are several lofty summits in this part of the chain: the *Riboubert* or *Grand Rubren* (11,142 ft.), and the *Pointe de Chambeignon* (11,155 ft.), which should command fine views.

*Majasset* is the station of the French douaniers, who have in this valley to guard an extensive frontier

by these passes. A little above the last village the traveller arrives at the small *Lac de Paroird*, a piece of water which evidently owes its origin to a stupendous landslip from the western side of the valley called the *Costabella*, which, it is said, descended in the 13th century. On the margin rye is cultivated, though the height is very great. After passing this lake and a series of cascades, the valley is ascended steeply for several miles by a wild path, bounded by lofty peaks, and terminating in the track to the eastern *Col de Longet* (8683 ft.). This extends over fine pasturages, at a great elevation, to an abrupt and magnificent descent into Piedmont.

The path by the western *Col de Longet*, called sometimes the *Col de Cula*, is that which leads to St. Véran; it rises on the left to cross the ridge which divides the valleys of Maurin and St. Véran. The ascent is quite pathless and often over patches of snow; the crest has a great elevation—10,076 English feet. It is attained in 4 hours from Majasset: the view from it is stupendous; on one hand towards Monte Viso, which appears quite close, and on the other to the Dauphiné Alps, which are finely seen. Scarcely a trace of vegetation is to be found on the summit. A very steep descent leads, in 2½ hrs., to St. Véran, 670 Inhab., 6591 feet above the sea, being probably the highest village, with the same amount of population, in Europe. Around it barley and rye are cultivated; the former to the elevation of nearly 7000 feet.

St. Véran is situated in a remarkably verdant and well-watered valley of the same name (*Auberge Fine*). Its appearance is extraordinary; for, instead of houses, it seems to be a mass of space and scaffolding; the houses are built entirely of wood, except that sometimes they rest on a basement of stone, which encloses the stable, a common practice in the high villages of the French Alps. Around the houses runs a gallery, with a roof projecting 6 or 8 feet, and fitted with the sort of scaf-

folding which gives so odd an appearance, at first sight, to the village; the purpose of this woodwork is to enable the inhabitants to dry their ill-ripened corn under shelter: their harvests generally take place early in the autumn, before the frosts set in, the seed having been sown in the July of the preceding year.

The Protestants are very numerous at St. Véran, consisting of twenty-four families; a Protestant church has lately been erected; but, as the pastor resides at La Chalpe, the service is neither frequent nor regular.

Here was occasionally exercised the devoted ministry of Neff, "the modern Apostle of the Alps." The Protestant communities of St. Véran, Fontgillarde, Freissinières, Dormilhouse, &c., some of these places being above 40 m. apart from others, formed the extensive district where he laboured with a devotion and energy to which his health and life were at last sacrificed.

The Roman Catholic church of St. Véran is situated near the highest part of the long straggling village. On its wall is cut, "1041 toises sur la mer."

The house of the curé adjoining is the only stone dwelling in the place.

From St. Véran an agreeable road leads down the valley to *Queyras*—a village which gives its name to a district in the valley of the Guil—and thence to *Briançon* (Rte. 162). But if the object of the traveller be to visit Abries and the upper valley of the Guil, he may attain them through scenes of grander character than those presented by the route through Queyras, and by a path 4 hrs. shorter. In going to Queyras he should not fail to notice a geological curiosity near Pra, on the opposite side of the torrent descending from St. Véran. The slopes have been covered with extremely hard blocks of diallage rock. In one place these have rested on a friable slaty limestone, which in the course of time has been washed away by the rain and melting snow, excepting the parts protected by these boulders.

In this way pillars, not unlike Gothic pinnacles, which, in some cases, have an elevation of 100 ft., have been left, with these rocks for capitals, presenting an extraordinary appearance, with an obvious origin. Similar pillars are to be seen in Switzerland, and other valleys of the French Alps, and in the Tyrol at Ober-Botzen, not far from Botzen, in the valley of the Adige.—*F.*

### ROUTE 169.

CUNEO TO NICE BY THE BATHS OF VALDIERI AND SAN MARTINO LAN-  
TOSCA. (A) BY THE COL DELLE  
CERESE. (B) BY THE COL DELLA  
FINESTRA.

A little beyond S. Dalmazzo (Rte. 170) a road turns up the Val di Gesso.

From the village of Valdieri, 5 m. (Inns, poor), the road, passing l. the entrance of an important tributary valley, that of the Gesso d'Entracque (see B), ascends a wild glen to the Baths of Valdieri (19 m. from S. Dalmazzo, 24 from Cuneo: 4426 ft.), which are situated in a narrow defile, the savageness of which is relieved by luxuriant beech-woods.

Here a good hotel (pension 9 fr.), well conducted by a company, affords excellent quarters for exploring a fine mountain neighbourhood. The baths are frequented by the best Piedmontese society in July and August, as a refuge from the summer heats. There are several detached chalet residences close to the baths, where rooms can be had during the season. *The Baths shut 1st September.*

The hot sulphureous and saline springs were known to the Romans. In the 16th cent. they were brought into fashion by the cure of Violante of Savoy, widow of Philibert II. The present huge bath-house was built 1860-62. The sulphur-springs are considered a remedy for ophthalmic affections, and there is also another and a curious production of the place which is said to be efficacious in cases

of gunshot-wounds, and some internal disorders. This is a cryptogamic plant (*Ulva labyrinthiformis*) which grows on the rocks down which the warm springs flow, and is applied externally.

The neighbourhood is celebrated for the richness of its flora. Numerous paths among the beech-woods afford short walks to the bathers. Longer excursions are much facilitated by the number of excellent hunting-paths made for the late king, who frequently came here for chamois-shooting. Close to the baths, a glen descends from the E. range, through which a good mule-path leads over a high but dull pass to the *Lago della Rovina* and Entracques (see B). Above the baths, the two principal glens unite. The W. is called the Vallasco. Here Victor Emmanuel had a hunting-lodge. Rough passes lead from its head to Vinadio and the valley of the Tinea.

The *Monte Matto* (10,220 ft.) rises N.W., and the *Rocca dell' Argentera*, or *Stella* (10,617 ft.), S.E., the highest peak of the Maritime Alps. These peaks are both accessible to fair climbers, and command superb panoramas, on one side, of the Alps and Piedmont, on the other of the French coast from Mentone to the Iles d'Hyères. Corsica is frequently visible, canopied by white clouds.

The route to San Martino mounts the left-hand or S. glen, the Valletta. The traveller will note that in place of chalets the shepherds find shelter in rude beehive-shaped cabins, built of stones and earth. Before reaching its head, a rough mule-track strikes up to the rt., and in 3½ hrs. from the baths, the traveller reaches the *Col delle Ceresse* (8412 ft.), which commands a fine view. The traveller will seek in vain for the Cima di Mercantour his map shows immediately E. of the pass. That peak is an invention of the engineers. A small Inn has been opened on the French side of the pass. The descent into the valley of the Vesubia is steep and picturesque. The head-waters of the stream belong to Italy, having been

left as part of the royal hunting-grounds when the County of Nizza was annexed by Louis Napoleon. Half-an-hour from the spot where the stream is crossed, or  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from the Col,

*St. Martin Lantosque* (3200 ft.), now French, is reached. Here there is a good *Inn* (H. des Alpes, chez Tardey) and guides competent for the neighbouring excursions. Within the last few years this remote little mountain town has been connected with Nice by an excellent carriage-road, and has become a resort for residents on the coast during the summer heats. Several villas or chalets are scattered about the old village, and a Lilliputian English ch. has been erected. The ancient walls have only recently been destroyed. The traveller in this part of the Alps is surprised to find even the smallest hamlets rudely fortified.

To mountaineers of moderate ambition the place has many attractions as a centre for the exploration of the Maritime Alps—which, if they do not rival the snows of Switzerland, or the crags of the Dolomites, offer some bold granitic scenery and superb views, and in their seaward valleys some of the most picturesque gorges in the whole chain, and a Mediterranean flora.

There are many quiet excursions, lists of which are hung up in the hotel. An easy ascent is that of the *Vista della Rorina*,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 hrs. The most tempting expedition for fair climbers is the *Cima di Gelus*, 10,423 ft., best made from the Hospice of La Madonna (see B).

[There is an easy but dull pass hence in 4 hrs. by the village of *Val di Blora* to the Tinea valley at St. Sauveur, and another, longer but more attractive, by the *Vallon de Molieres* to Isola higher up on the same river.]

Diligences run daily to and fro between Nice and St. Martin in summer.

The new road descends the left bank of the Vesubia through a narrow and winding defile, leaving on the l.

the new *Baths of Berthemont* (fair *Inn*), to Roccabigliera. Here olives appear side by side with pines. The lower valley of the Vesubia is exceeded in picturesque beauty by few in the Alps. After 9 miles the village of *Lantosca* is reached (two poor *Inns*) on a brow commanding the open valley. Some 2 miles further, the new road crosses the river and slowly ascends through a romantic gorge to the top of a cliff known as *Le Saut des Français* from a tradition that French soldiers were hurled over it in a disastrous engagement, when the troops of the Republic were, in 1800, driven by the Austrians across the Var. Passing the scattered houses of Duranç, the road descends round a wooded hollow, and turning a corner, remounts the barren slopes above the roadless lower gorge of the Vesubia to

*Levenzo*, a village placed on a high ridge dividing the waters of the Vesubia from those falling by a narrow glen directly to Nice. The *Inn* (H. National) is by the roadside apart from the village. Hence there is a noble view down into the Var valley and of the ranges and coast beyond it.

The descent to Nice (14 m.) lies through a narrow and sterile glen. [Pedestrians may find a very beautiful path across the hills to *Aspremont*, and thence either by a good road or over the top of *Mont Chauve* to Nice in 4 to 5 hrs.] At the *Grotte de St. André* a picturesque defile is passed before the rich basin of Nice opens on the traveller.

Nice (see *Handbook for France*).

#### B. *Valdieri to St. Martin, by the Col della Finestra.*

This is the easiest pass across the chain between the Col di Tenda and Col de l'Argentière, and is much frequented by the country people. A mile above the village of Valdieri, a road to the left mounts (3 miles) to the large village of *Entracques*, situated in a sterile basin (*Albero Fiorito*, poor, a clean bed). The trout of *Entracques* are celebrated.

Beyond *Entracques* a carriage-road

leads to the junction of the Val della Rovina (45 m). [A path leads up this glen in 2 hrs. to the picturesque Lago della Rovina, whence there are mule-paths to the Madonna della Finestra and Baths of Valdieri, and a very rough direct pass to St. Martin.]

The mule-road to the Col della Finestra mounts the left-hand glen. Glimpses up side glens show the glaciers of Mont Clapier. In 3½ hrs. from Entracques the Col is reached. A steep descent leads to the *Hospice of La Madonna*, where rough quarters may be obtained. [Hence there are tracks across the mountains to the Col di Tenda-road.] A further descent of 2 hrs. through pine-forests leads to St. Martin.

### ROUTE 170.

CUNEO TO NICE OR MENTONE, BY THE COL DI TENDA.

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Cuneo to           |      |
| Limone . . . . .   | 20½  |
| Tenda . . . . .    | 27½  |
| Grandola . . . . . | 18½  |
| Sospello . . . . . | 18½  |
| Scarena . . . . .  | 18½  |
| Nice . . . . .     | 23   |
|                    | 126½ |

Rly. from Turin in 3 hrs. to

*Cuneo* (or *Coni*) *Stat.*, 1500 ft. above the sea (*Inns*: the Barra di Ferro (Posta), good: H. de Londres), a city of 23,000 Inhab., situated between the Stura and Gesso torrents, as it were at the junction of the Alps and Apennines. The view extending over the green plain to the snows of Monte Rosa is superb. The neighbourhood of the town is most fertile, and the rivers abound in fish,—the markets are consequently provided with an abundance rare even in Italy.

Cuneo was, in its origin, a city of refuge. About the year 1100, Boniface, Marquis of Savoy, had occupied this district, which formed a part of the marquisate of Susa; but his authority was entirely inadequate to enforce the observance of the laws or

to ensure tranquillity, and the lords of the adjoining castles so plundered the inhabitants of the surrounding country, that they determined upon resistance. The people came together under the colour of a pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Our Lady of the Wood, now included in the city, and there determined to take vengeance, if, as usual, any of their wives and daughters were insulted by the petty tyrants of the surrounding castles. Cause of offence was soon given; the peasants assembled again, destroyed the castles, slew the oppressors, and retreating in a body to the present site of the city, a *wedge-like* piece of land between the two rivers, they began to build. The abbot of San Dalmazzo, to whom the woods belonged, gladly permitted a settlement which gave him the prospect of such a numerous vassalage; and the "*nuova villa di Cuneo*" rapidly rose into consequence. In the 16th cent. Cuneo was strongly fortified, and its subsequent history is a succession of sieges. No stronghold was more celebrated in the military history of Piedmont, until 1800, when, after the battle of Marengo, the three consuls decreed, on the 5th July, that the fortifications of Cuneo, the citadels of Milan and Tortona, the fortress of Ceva, and the gates and bastions of Turin, should all be destroyed; and, before the end of the month, those massy girdles of Cuneo were riven from their foundations, to the great advantage of the inhabitants. The *Duomo*, or cathedral, is the ancient sanctuary of the "*Madonna del Bosco*," but it offers nothing remarkable. *San Francesco*, belonging to a Capuchin convent, a Gothic ch. of the 12th cent., is said to have been built in the time of the saint himself. The principal street, with arcaded house-fronts, is most picturesque. There is a pleasant public walk at the junction of Gesso and Stura.

[16 m. S.E. of Cuneo, by a good road, lies the ancient *Certosa of Pesio*, founded 1174, now a bathing establishment with fair accommodation, a charming garden. and an

exquisite neighbourhood. The surrounding mountains are clothed in beech-forests, and command views of the great chain extending to Monte Rosa. The Certosa is 3 hrs. from Limone by a mule-path, and can also be reached from Tenda by an easy pass.]

The road (tramway as far as S. Dalmazzo), on leaving the town, runs across a level plain, with noble views of Monte Viso and the Maritime Alps to

*Borgo di San Dalmazzo*, a village of 4200 Inhab., supposed to be the remains of the city of Pedone, destroyed by the Milanese in 1250.

*Robillante*, a village of 2700 Inhab. Hitherto the road has passed through the great plain of Piedmont, which is watered by the Po, the Maira, the Grana, and the Stura; it now enters the mountains and begins to ascend. The plains are fertile, and nothing can be more beautiful than the little streams by which they are irrigated and crossed.

*Limone*, 3340 ft. (*Inns*: Posta; *Europa*). *Italian Custom House*. The traveller ascends rapidly by a good alpine road, though constructed with less skill than those of more recent date. The abrupt turns of the terraces are often almost alarming in their aspect, nor are they so well defended as could be wished. The danger, or rather the semblance of it, is of course more felt in returning from Nice. About half-way from the summit an attempt was made by the princes of Savoy to carry a tunnel through the mountain, and thus avoid the passage over its crest. If completed, it would have been more than 1½ m. long. The crest is a narrow ridge, 6158 ft. It commands a very fine view of the Alps, from Monte Viso to Monte Rosa, while on the S. the Mediterranean may be discovered. During more than three months in the year, and not unfrequently during five, the Col di Tenda is impassable for wheel carriages, though it can always be crossed by sledges, and generally by mules, provided there be no storms; for the wind

is so violent at times that the mules themselves can hardly keep their footing, and are compelled to wind round a more sheltered path. The descent on the S. side is by a succession of 75 zigzags from the house of refuge near the summit.

*Tenda* (2680 ft.), at the S. foot of the Col; 2600 Inhab. (*Inn*: Hôtel National.) An excellent station for sketching and fishing, and it is a place of much note in the feudal history of Italy. From the family of Facino Cane it became vested in the unfortunate Beatrice di Tenda, wife of Filippo Maria Visconti, by whose commands she was tortured and condemned to death. There are some picturesque remains of the castle.

The road from Tenda is amongst the earliest of the alpine roads. It was made by Carlo Emanuele I., 1591; and improved in 1780 by Vittore Amadeo III., as is commemorated in two inscriptions near its commencement. Fine scenery and good chamois-hunting in the mountain-range W. of the Col di Tenda.

3 m. after leaving Tenda is *S. Dalmazzo di Tenda*, formerly an abbey, now a Pension, much frequented during the summer heats, its climate cool, though it is only about 2000 ft. "Accommodation excellent (8 frs. a day, everything included); the situation is beautiful, and the neighbourhood abounds in picturesque scenery." In the mountains W. 4 hrs. are some rocks, inscribed with rude figures, which have not yet been examined by competent judges, and may prove to be monuments of a primitive tribe. They are near some tarns known as the *Laghi delle Meraviglie*.

[About 3 hrs.' walk from S. Dalmazzo are some lead-mines, at the foot of *Mombego*, one of the highest of the S. spurs of the Maritime Alps, which is easily ascended, and from which the view over the Mediterranean and the plains of Piedmont and Lombardy is splendid, stretching to Turin, Pavia, Milan, and the snowy Alps beyond.]

Beyond San Dalmazzo the road becomes exceedingly striking. Where-

ever the rocks allow the possibility of raising a wall you see a little village in the cleft, like the nest of a bird. The finest of these savage defiles of the Roya, the gorge of Broglie, is below.

*Saorgio*, a town of 2600 Inhab., where a fort perched upon a rocky knoll commands the passage of the gorge. It was taken by the French under Massena in the campaign of 1794. The Roya abounds with trout. The upper portion of this valley remains in the hands of the Italians; but the strong position of Saorgio and the valley of the Roya is occupied by the French. The *French Custom House* station is at Fontana, on the N. side of the pass of Saorgio.

*Giandola* (*Inns*: H. des Etrangers, a good mountain inn; la Poste), the first French village 980 ft. a. s., and grandly situated at the foot of high schistose rocks, which look as if they were on the point of crushing the inhabitants. [A road from Giandola to *Ventimiglia*, along the Roya, passes through a grand gorge, and enables the traveller to reach the railway to Genoa, and to proceed into Italy without making the *détour* by Nice or Mentone.] The Nice road leaves on the l. *Broglie*, a town of 2700 Inhab., near which are the ruins of the castle of Trivella; and ascends the mountain of *Bronis* by a very steep ascent, about 1500 ft., to the pass of

the same name, the sides of which are covered with wild lavender.

*Sospello*, 1190 ft. a. s. (*Inn*: H. Carencio), 4300 Inhab., is a sleeping-place for travellers by *vetturino*. Its situation is very beautiful. Through it rushes the *Bevera*, a roaring mountain stream; and all around rise the mountains out of an exceedingly fertile plain. The valley abounds in thick woods of olives and figs. The *Bevera* forms a junction with the Roya about 4 m. before entering the sea at *Ventimiglia*.

[A cross-road branches off (14 m.) to *Mentone*, by the *Col de Castiglione* (2400 ft.) and the valley of *Carei*: by this route travellers will reach *Mentone* in as short a time as Nice, through a very picturesque country.]

The road commences to ascend from the inn door at Sospello to the *Col di Braus*, 3300 ft. In the autumn lavender-water is made on the sides of this mountain by the peasantry, whose rude apparatus is curious.

*Scarena*, 2000 Inhab. After crossing another hill, we descend along the *Escarena*, one of the tributaries of the *Paglione*, which is followed by Nice, and to the full luxuriance of the *Riviera*, passing by the villages of *Pallarea*, *Drap*, and *La Trinita*.

*Nice.* (See *Handbook for France*.)

## I N D E X.

\*. \* In order to facilitate reference to the Routes, most of them are repeated in the Index : thus, GENEVA to Chamonix is also mentioned under the head Chamonix \* to Geneva. Such reversed Routes are marked in the Index with an asterisk to distinguish them.

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